

*u. R. h.*





REPEAL THE 1850 ACTS

1851

# REPEAL OF THE 1850 ACTS

TO REMOVE THE OBSTACLES TO THE  
FREEDOM OF THE AFRICAN

SUPPLEMENTAL

PRINTED AND SOLD BY THE  
NATIONAL REPEAL SOCIETY, 1851

LONDON: PRINTED BY  
J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD



REPEAL PRIZE ESSAYS.

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ESSAYS

ON THE

REPEAL OF THE UNION,

TO WHICH THE ASSOCIATION PRIZES WERE  
AWARDED;

WITH A

SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAY,

RECOMMENDED BY THE JUDGES.

BOSTON COLLEGE LIBRARY  
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4/ PRINTED AND PUBLISHED FOR THE  
LOYAL NATIONAL REPEAL ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND,

BY

JAMES DUFFY,

25, ANGLESEA-STREET, DUBLIN.

1845.

ADVERTISEMENT

Agreed to at Public Meeting of the Association,  
Monday, 18th September, 1901

ROYAL NATIONAL REPEAL ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

The Committee of the Royal National Repeal Association of Ireland  
to award the following essay in praise of the best Essay written  
in support of the repeal of the Act of Union—

In publishing the following Essays, the Association disclaims  
all responsibility for the opinions or statements contained in  
any of them,

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## ADVERTISEMENT,

AGREED TO AT PUBLIC MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION, ON  
MONDAY, 16TH SEPTEMBER, 1844.

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### LOYAL NATIONAL REPEAL ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND.

THE Committee of the Loyal National Repeal Association propose to award the following sums as prizes for the best Essays written in support of the Repeal of the Act of Union;—

For the best Essay, .. .. .	£100
„ the second best, .. .. .	75
„ the third best .. .. .	50

The Essays are to be sent to the Secretary of the Repeal Association on or before the 1st of January, 1845; the name of the author not to be attached to his Essay, but to be sent in a sealed envelope, bearing some fictitious signature, corresponding to a similar signature attached to the Essay.

The Committee will not examine the letters of the unsuccessful competitors.

The Committee will not hold themselves bound to award the prizes, or any of them, unless the Essays sent in by the competitors, shall be of such a character as to render their publication advisable, with a view to the advancement of the cause of Repeal. The Committee reserve the right of publishing the Prize Essays at the expense of the Association, without the interference of any claims of copyright.

It is suggested that the authors should state and refute the arguments which may be advanced against the establishment of a Domestic Legislature for Ireland; that they should state fully the arguments for Repeal; that they should develop a form of executive and legislative constitution, calculated to secure the happiness of the Irish people, and to promote unity of feeling between the constituent parts of the British empire. That they should illustrate

the international relations which they propose shall hereafter subsist between Great Britain and Ireland, by examples taken from the history and existing institutions of other countries, and, in particular, that they should examine how far the constitution of Norway, and its connexion with Sweden, may serve as a model for the new constitution of Ireland—that they should describe the probable consequences which may be expected to result from a Repeal of the Union, pointing out the dangers to be apprehended, and the means by which those dangers may be averted.

N.B.—These suggestions are not obligatory, and are meant only to intimate the sort of Essay which the Committee consider would be most useful.

The Essays are not to exceed in length 200 pages of the ordinary size and print used in the report of the Repeal Association.

The Committee, in awarding these Prizes, according to the comparative excellence of the Essays, will not hold themselves responsible for the sentiments they contain.

JUDGES APPOINTED :

MR. JOHN O'CONNELL, M.P.

MR. THOMAS DAVIS.

MR. WM. SMITH O'BRIEN, M.P.

By Order,

T. M. RAY, Secretary.

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## REPORT.

READ AT PUBLIC MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION ON MONDAY,  
31ST MARCH, 1845.

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“REPORT ON REPEAL ESSAYS.

“The judges appointed to consider the Essays on the Repeal of the Union, report as follows :—

“Forty-eight Essays were sent in. Each of the judges read the



48 Essays separately, and they compared their notes and opinions afterwards. They have adjudged the first Prize for the Essay signed 'Ith,' and entitled 'Ireland as she was, as she is, and as she shall be,' written by Michael Joseph Barry, Esq., barrister-at-law.

"They have adjudged the second prize for the Essay signed 'B. S. M.' and entitled 'Reasons for a Repeal of the Legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland,' written by Michael Staunton, Esq., alderman.

"The third prize they have given for the Essay signed 'An Irish Protestant,' entitled 'The Rights of the Irish Nation,' but the judges regret that they are not now at liberty to mention the name of the writer of this Essay.

"They much regret that it was an omission in the resolutions under which they acted, that no candidate should receive a prize in case he refused to allow his name to be known.

"The judges recommend that should the authors of the works so desire, they shall be at liberty to sell the copyright of them, on condition that they be printed in such size and type, and sold at such a price as the Committee of the Association shall approve, and published, if possible, within two months; but that if any of the authors prefer it, his Essay shall be printed by the Association, in such way as to bind up and be issuable with the other Essays.

"The Judges also recommend that the Essay signed 'Anglo Scoto Hibernicus,' be printed as an appendix to the three prize Essays, on the specific ground that it contains a short and able exposition of the principles of Federalism, which it is desirable that the Repealers of Ireland should have an opportunity of considering, in connection with the anti-Federalist views contained in the other Essays.

"The judges wish to bear testimony to the great ability and learning displayed in very many of the Essays to which they have not awarded prizes.

"Signed,

"JOHN O'CONNELL.

"W. S. O'BRIEN.

"THOMAS DAVIS."

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BY THE REV. J. GODKIN.

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PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE REPEAL ASSOCIATION.

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FORMERLY OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.





FIRST PRIZE REPEAL ESSAY.





FIRST PRIZE REPEAL ESSAY.

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IRELAND,  
AS SHE WAS, AS SHE IS,  
AND  
AS SHE SHALL BE.

BY  
MICHAEL JOSEPH BARRY, ESQ.  
BARRISTER AT LAW.

“————— All my life long  
I have beheld, with most respect, the man  
Who knew himself, and knew the ways before him;  
And from amongst them chose considerately,  
With a clear foresight, not a blind-fold courage;  
And, having chosen, with a steadfast mind,  
Pursued his purposes.”  
PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE.

DUBLIN:  
PUBLISHED BY JAMES DUFFY,  
25, ANGLESEA-STREET.  
1845.



TO

THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND,

THIS DEFENCE OF THEIR RIGHTS

IS DEDICATED,

BY THEIR FELLOW-COUNTRYMAN,

THE AUTHOR.





## P R E F A C E .

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FOR the opinions contained in the following Essay, the author only, is responsible. This he thinks it right to state unequivocally, lest it might be supposed, that the Repeal Association, in awarding it their first prize, meant it to be considered as an authorised representation of the views taken by them on the subject of Repeal. Such is not the fact. In offering the prizes for the Repeal Essays, the Committee distinctly intimated, that they would not be, in any degree, accountable for the opinions that the writers might avow; but, that the judges would take into consideration the arguments relied on by each, and would award the prize in favor of that Essay, which seemed to them to contain the best general proofs of the necessity for Repeal, wholly irrespective of the particular views of the writer.

To the sentiments expressed in the following pages, therefore, the author only is, in the slightest degree, committed, and to those sentiments he desires to be committed in the fullest and most unrestricted sense: nor, has he the least wish to lessen his responsibility by sharing it.

It is right to add, that the Essay, as printed, has been altered in no respect, from the original manuscript, except, by the insertion of the motto in the title page, and those prefixed to the different chapters; the addition of a short appendix, and one omission made on the unanimous recommendation of the judges.

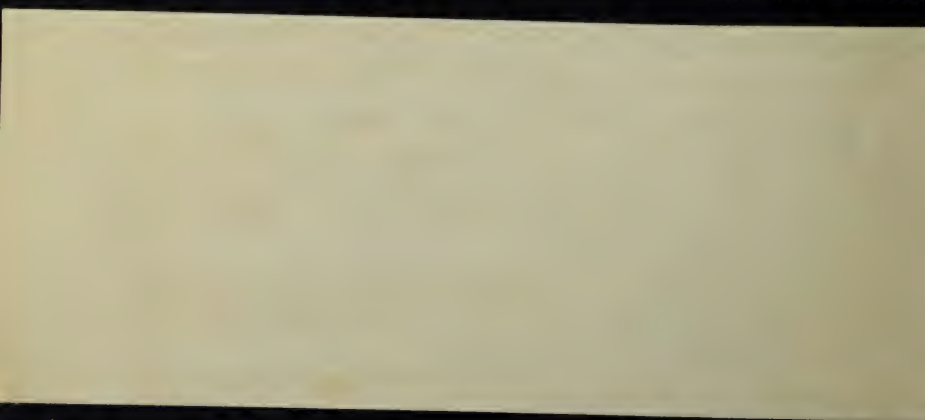




## ERRATA.

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For "*outflanked*," page 5, line 7, read "*turned*:" a position may be so circumstanced, as to be capable of being outflanked, but obstacles may prevent its being *turned* by the outflanking body. Strike out the words, "*it was under this the Clontarf meeting was suppressed*."—Appendix, page 112, line 14 from the foot of the page. The list of Coercive Acts referred to, was taken from Smiles's History of Ireland, p. 477, and given to the author, who did not detect the error till the Essay had gone through the press.



# IRELAND,

AS SHE WAS, AS SHE IS, AND AS SHE SHALL BE.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE PRACTICABILITY OF REPEAL.

“ The foolish word impossible,  
At once for aye disdain.  
No power can bar a people's will,  
A people's RIGHT to gain.”

SPIRIT OF THE NATION.

IN considering the Repeal Question, as it is familiarly termed, three distinct topics present themselves for our examination: first, the practicability of procuring a Repeal of the Act of Union; secondly, the advantages or losses to Ireland which would follow from its Repeal; thirdly, the form of Constitution which would ensure to her the greatest portion of those advantages, and protect her from the greatest share of those losses.

These three topics, I shall discuss in the order in which I have set them down, and shall at once proceed to their investigation. I begin therefore, by stating, that in my opinion, the Repeal of the Act of Union is a perfectly practicable measure, and its practicability fully capable of proof.

Those who deny the practicability of Repeal, state as the grounds of their belief, that England will never voluntarily agree to it, and that Ireland cannot compel her to do so.

The former of these positions I will at present pass over, and will at once turn to the consideration of the second and more important assertion, that Ireland cannot compel England to grant a Repeal of the Union.

The truth or falsehood of this assertion must be honestly and carefully investigated, for on it, I conceive, the whole question of



Repeal—as regards its practicability—depends. I am satisfied that Ireland must right herself or remain unrighted. The people, whose liberty depends on their being able to reconcile the attainment of it to the selfish views taken by another people of their own interests, have little chance of growing into a nation. Perhaps they are hardly fitted for the dignity.

England opposes the Repeal of the Union, because she believes that it would prove mischievous to her. She believes, however, that Separation would be still more mischievous. Whenever she finds herself under the necessity of choosing between Separation and Repeal, she will assent to the latter. Repeal must not be carried by the *exercise* of physical force. That could only terminate in Separation or re-conquest. But, though the *exercise* of physical force cannot achieve Repeal, the *possession* of it may. Whenever Ireland possesses such an amount of it as, if *exercised*, would effect a Separation from England, its *presence* will secure Repeal. Repeal is not more difficult than Separation.

I shall in a subsequent place shew, that it is infinitely less difficult; that a vast variety of means may exist, sufficient to secure the former object; yet wholly inadequate to the latter; but I will for the present grapple with the greatest difficulty which the question presents, and assuming that no means can achieve the one, which would not be sufficient for the achievement of the other, I will proceed to shew that if Ireland considered complete Separation necessary, she could enforce it.

It will be said that this is a dangerous topic to discuss. I think it is far more dangerous to shun the discussion of it. War—especially civil war, is an evil which it is the duty of every good man to avert. The best mode by which he can do so, is by shewing its necessary consequences to the parties that would engage in it. England and Ireland are thus circumstanced. Ireland smarting from misgovernment and insult, and burning for Independence, believes that the result of a conflict between them would be the certain restoration of her nationality. England flushed with conquest, arrogant from acknowledged sway, and proud of her wealth and territory, thinks the struggle could have no other issue, than the chastisement of a turbulent and aspiring province. This state of feeling in the two countries is fraught with mischief. From it all real danger springs. Let each retain this confidence in her own power, and the result, ere long, must, of necessity, be open warfare between them. On the other hand, prove to either country that her view is erroneous: convince England, that the struggle must, in all probability, end in the dismemberment of her empire: or Ireland, that it must terminate

in her subjugation, and you secure their mutual peace.\* No country will march to defeat with her eyes open.

I need hardly say that I mean to discuss, not rights, but resources. I would spurn the idea of discussing Ireland's right to anything which is essential to her prosperity and freedom. These blessings are the right of every people, a right which is *inalienable*.

Let us proceed, then, to consider what means Ireland possesses of effecting a Separation from England; in other words, what is the amount of her military strength?

It is no very easy matter to form a correct estimate of this. Many of the elements which constitute the military strength of Ireland, are less perceptible to the soldier's than to the statesman's eye. She, however, possesses a large share of what both must acknowledge to be formidable; and what neither, if wise, would be very willing to encounter.

The first great element of a nation's strength is, of course, population. In this Ireland certainly is not deficient. According to the census of 1841 she has 8,173,966 inhabitants. Of these there are engaged in agriculture 5,406,743, or something over sixty-six per cent. of the whole. The habits of life of these latter, their exposure to the weather at all seasons of the year, their early initiation into hardship and privation of every sort, their ignorance of all comfort and cheerful endurance of the poorest food and scantiest clothing have, unhappily, combined to render them the finest race of men in the world for military purposes.† Nor is it merely physical strength and activity which fit the Irish for military pursuits.

\* That the idea of Ireland's power to attain Independence, is not confined to a few enthusiasts of the Ultra-Irish party, will be seen from the following extract, from Mr. Grey Porter's preface to his pamphlet—"Ireland." Having stated that a Federal is the only fair Union which can exist between the two countries, he says: "If the English country gentlemen say, 'We will have no change here. We will not put ourselves out of the way. You must continue to knock under to us, &c.;' why then, (for the Irish people are *determined* to Repeal the Act of Union, of 1801, an abominable measure, bought and sold on both sides, and all against Ireland,) the general disaffection in Ireland will, on the first occasion, shape itself into complete National Independence."—*Pref. p. ix.*

† "Mr. Field, the eminent mechanical engineer of London, had occasion to examine the relative powers of British and Irish Labourers, to raise weights by means of a crane. He communicated his results to the Institute of Civil Engineers, in London. He found that the utmost efforts of a man, lifting at the rate of one foot per minute, ranged:

Englishmen, from 11,505lb. to 24,255lb.

Irishmen, „ 17,325lb. „ 27,562lb.

The utmost effort of a Welshman was 15,112lb.—*Kane's Industrial Resources of Ireland*, p. 382.

Professor Quetelet, of Brussels, and Professor Forbes, of Edinburgh, have made observations on the height, strength, &c., of the English, Scotch, Irish, and Belgian Students, establishing the superiority of the Irish in both, to the other races. I do not, however, consider the observations made on the class of persons they tested, sufficient to warrant any very general conclusion.

Their buoyancy of temperament and indomitable spirits, which no fatigue or difficulty can subdue, adapt them still more than their other qualities for such pursuits. They have besides inherited a large stock of chivalrous ardour, and it is the common observation of military men that the Irish recruit is half a soldier by the time he has got into his uniform jacket. On the whole I think it may be safely stated that Ireland possesses, at the *minimum*, an effective military population of one million six hundred thousand men.

The next thing after population which should be taken into account, in looking at a country's military resources is, her commissariat. Let us consider that of Ireland.

Some countries are so circumstanced that their inhabitants could not exist if their ports were blockaded, and the channels by which they receive supplies of food, &c. from other nations, were shut up. England, at present, is probably in this position. She is obliged to import food to a very large extent. Ireland certainly is not. She is a great exporter of it. The produce of her soil is infinitely beyond the necessities of her inhabitants, and a blockade of her coast (if possible,) though it may seriously incommode, could not subdue her. She could exist, as it has been forcibly observed, "if a wall of brass were built around her."

Her export of food, it is true, is much greater than it should be, and results mainly from the fact that her people do not consume so large a portion of the produce of the soil as they ought to do. They are scantily and miserably fed. But it is not the quantity of food that her population ought to consume, but the quantity that they do habitually consume, that it becomes necessary to consider here—all beyond that is, in a military point of view, a surplus. If a people habitually consumes cheese and bacon, it will not be satisfied to live for any length of time without them: if, on the other hand, its habitual food be potatoes, then it will not be very discontented during an emergency to continue living on them, notwithstanding it may be very just and proper, that it should be better fed. To ascertain how much of the soil of Ireland is actually burthened with the support of the overwhelming majority of her inhabitants, it is only necessary to look at the potatoe fields. Nearly all the rest is surplus.

The observations here made as to food are equally applicable to the other *necessaries* of life. Fuel, both coal and turf,\* exists in abundance, and clothing would be readily manufactured. A nation fighting for her freedom does not look for luxuries.

\* Kane's Industrial Resources of Ireland, p. 7, *et seq.*



Another important matter for consideration in estimating a nation's strength, is its topography; the field which it presents for military operations. Ireland would be an embarrassing country for an invading army to occupy. Except in its bog districts, it is, perhaps, not very formidable by nature, for, though many of its mountain passes are of considerable strength; yet, as its chains of hills sink gradually into the level land at their extremities, and may, therefore, be out-flanked by an attacking force, they are of no great value as a defence. Art, however, has created obstacles which would seriously check the movements of hostile troops through the country, in the vast number of fences which traverse it in every direction. The banks of earth which form the common boundaries to the fields throughout the chief part of Munster, are of a thickness to be proof against musketry, and often against ordinary field artillery, and would set the movements of regular cavalry at defiance. The close hedges of Leinster would prove equally impracticable to the latter force, and a very active light infantry only, could be at all effective in contesting them. If Ireland were deficient in artillery, the possession of it to an adverse army could be rendered nearly useless, by the breaking up of the roads, as the close and fenced-in nature of the country would render it impossible to transport guns across it, (as might be done over the wide even plains of the Continent,) when the ordinary routes were rendered impassible. This would, no doubt, produce much inconvenience to the inhabitants of the country; but when a nation thinks a matter worth fighting for, she must think it worth suffering inconveniences for too.

But it will be said that Ireland wants all the *materiel* of war, that she possesses neither arms nor ammunition. This is not altogether true. It is a fact pretty well known, to all who are really acquainted with the country, that arms are very extensively dispersed throughout Ireland; and, though, in particular localities they may not be much in the hands of the people, they are in quite sufficient abundance to be formidable. One weapon, too, in which the lower classes of the Irish place great confidence, and which they have already made very destructive use of—the pike, is so easily procured, that it may be almost said to be within the reach of every man.\*

But, if the country were never so deficient in the implements of war, the facilities of procuring them in case of a National struggle, are so great, as to make the want of them a matter of very small importance. No man in his senses can imagine, that a country with

\* See for further information on the subject of the military resources of Ireland, and for confirmation of the opinions put forward on the matter, in the text, the Appendix to the Essay, in which, for convenience, the authorities have been cited.

the extent of sea coast, which Ireland possesses ; a coast, moreover, the access to which is through no narrow channel, like the entrance to the Baltic, or the Mediterranean ; but open to the great highway of nations, the Atlantic, with safe and navigable creeks and harbours in almost every mile of its extent, could be prevented from receiving supplies of arms or ammunition by any other vigilance, but that of her own inhabitants. The statesman who would rest his expectations of retaining Ireland an unwilling province of the British Empire, upon such a hope, would not be long without cause to lament his folly.

But, allowing that Ireland may possess, or be supplied with the *materiel* of war, what can it avail her without a disciplined force ? Possibly she may not be wholly deficient in such a force. Without now referring to any elements of a disciplined body existing within herself, and which, in the case of a *general national quarrel*, might prove the most dangerous to England of any which could be found—is it so certain that from abroad she could expect nothing ? Is it not within the range of probabilities, that in spite of any watchfulness, on the part of England, she might obtain the assistance most desirable for a people seeking Independence ; that is assistance enough to aid and to organize, but not enough to assume the tyrant after it had enacted the friend. This deserves to be well pondered on.

Her own population too, as I have before stated, are the most apt of military scholars. I may remark, in passing, that their expertness at spade labour, would render them invaluable for the throwing up of field works—a fact of no slight consequence.

Again, the advantages to regular troops, in fighting on a great scale, with irregular bodies properly led, are very questionable, where the great preponderance in numbers is on the side of the latter. This *guerilla* warfare is terribly harrassing work, to a disciplined army. The constant watchfulness, fatigue, and uncertainty, wear them out with fearful quickness. There are few things which an experienced officer would relish less. There is nothing which it requires an officer of so much skill and experience to meet. A young, impetuous, inexperienced man would make very sad work of it. Bivouacking in an Irish bog, with a hostile population on every side, a rainy climate, sick horses, and fagged men, would prove one of the most unattractive forms of a military life.

All these matters may give food for thought. From their nature I have touched but lightly on them ; my object being only to shew that this “reconquest of Ireland,” so flippantly talked about by some parties at the other side of the channel, is not altogether so simple a task as might, at a hasty view of it, appear. A war against a *nation*,

in its literal sense, is always formidable work. A war by the soldiery of one country against the soldiery of another, in which the *people* of the latter are indifferent enough (it being commonly no affair of theirs,) is a matter of quite another kind. Young military men, it is true, talk very sneeringly of popular resistance. Considered on a small scale, they are right enough; but they hardly estimate the difficulties of a campaign against the liberties of a whole country, where every man they meet is an enemy, and every inch of ground they hold must be held by the sword. Experienced soldiers think otherwise, and the opinions of such men may perhaps be the best commentary on this part of my subject.\*

I have now concluded my investigation of the mere physical advantages possessed by Ireland for military purposes. I have, however, said already that many of the elements of her strength are more perceptible by the statesman's than by the soldier's eye; one of these I will now advert to.

Mr. Grey Porter, in the Preface to his Pamphlet already referred to, says,†—"I think we (in Ireland), approach a time *when peace will be worse to us than war*; that the more quiet grows the country, the stronger the *government*, the more easily will the landlords draw away their rents to live elsewhere." Here, indeed, is matter for deep consideration. If peace be worse to Ireland than war, then, indeed, she possesses an element of strength for an armed struggle, such as nations seldom have. Let it be remembered, too, that the opinion cited is not that of a mob-courting demagogue; but the quietly propounded belief of a wealthy Conservative Irish Landlord. It is worth a British statesman's notice.

Such are the arguments, as I conceive, in favor of Ireland's capability to attain her independence by force, if circumstances led her people to suppose that it was their duty to have recourse to it. I do not believe them to be without weight. Men may attach various degrees of importance to them; but those who slight them altogether, I am certain act a rash part. England, it is true, is a great nation; has vast resources in money and immense territorial possessions. These latter, however, are in fact, her weakness, not her strength. She has not one colony from which she could draw men to recruit her armies,—most of them she holds only by military occupation. In nearly all of them—nay in her own bosom—there exists what, in the event of a war with Ireland would, in all likelihood, prove a fatal cancer to her—a numerous population; Irish by birth or by descent; Irish in feelings and sympathies; and having carried with

\* See Appendix.

† Ireland, p. vi.



them, in most instances, the traditions, the animosities, and not least formidable—the poverty of the land from which they have sprung. What is the condition of her own people? The mass of them are poor, ignorant and discontented—without comfort—without hope—without religion—without moral restraint, crushed to the earth by an aristocracy of enormous wealth, standing out in gorgeous and dazzling relief from a background of misery and despair. These, are not the men to preserve her empire in time of danger. If England, to-morrow, were plunged into a war with Ireland how long would she exist without the aid of foreign bayonets—the subsidized mercenaries of continental Europe? How many branches of the human family believe to-day that their freedom must be erected on the ruins of her gigantic empire? Wise men will not dismiss these questions without reflection.

Hitherto I have discussed Separation rather than Repeal, I have assumed, for the sake of argument, that the same difficulties stood in the way of one as of the other, and have sought to shew that even were that the case, Repeal would still be attainable. The assumption that the difficulties in the way of each are equal, would however be very erroneous. Ireland may be unable to cope in arms, even on her own soil, with England, and may yet have power enough to achieve her legislative independence. She could stop every wheel by which the machinery of government is worked, and without one act of violence, so paralyze Great Britain as to make her gladly come to any terms. Suppose, for instance, that the Irish people unanimously resolved to pay no taxes, imposed by the Imperial Parliament, until enforced by legal process, and carried that resolution into effect with the same determination that they evinced during the tithe war of 1832. Where would the Irish revenue be in six months? Suppose them along with this, to protest against the consumption of all articles of English manufacture, and of all goods imported in English vessels. How long would England be without feeling the results in her manufacturing and shipping interests? Let a like determination on the part of the people, against enlisting in the British army be taken into consideration, and its consequences be weighed. None of these are novelties, thrown out as hints for disaffected persons, to take up and act upon, but on the contrary have been working long and deeply in the popular mind of Ireland.\* A word might bring them into action. To carry

\* Many projects, indeed, have been suggested of a much more extreme kind, so mischievous, and tending so strongly to break up all bonds of society, that I would not even refer to them here. One thing I may, however, hint at, namely, that the *absentee* drain from the *land* of Ireland, she could at any moment stop.



them out to such an extent, and in such a manner as to affect seriously the revenue and power of England, would of course entail great and manifold inconveniences on the people; but that they possess the steadiness and resolution to endure those inconveniences to the fullest extent, it is only necessary to refer to their astonishing perseverance in the temperance system, one so strongly repugnant to all their previous habits and opinions.

Upon this question of the practicability of Repeal, I shall dilate no further, I think I have said enough to convince those who reflect calmly on the subject, that Irishmen have it in their own power, to secure the independence of Ireland: that they need be under no obligations for it to the English people. The good will of the latter, I should be sorry to throw away, but I would be more sorry to place my country unnecessarily under obligations to them, or to any other people upon earth. Our struggle is for Independence, and it should be conducted in an Independent spirit. We seek Ireland for the Irish—I think it would be well to add—through the exertions of Irishmen. This might not hasten the time of our deliverance: but it would make it a deliverance indeed. For myself, I would readily see the great consummation of our hopes postponed for twenty years, to see it gained by the Union of all Irishmen. To share like brothers the blessings which it would bring, we should have joined like brothers to obtain them.

## CHAPTER II.

## CONSEQUENCES OF REPEAL.

“ One argument from experience, in political reasoning, is worth a thousand arguments in theory.”

COOKE.—*Argument for the Union,*

I NOW come to consider the second portion of the subject ; namely, the advantages or losses to Ireland, which would result from the Repeal of the Act of Union.

I shall first state the advantages. This I must do in a general way. To set them forth in detail, would, I conceive, be to enumerate everything that aids in constituting the strength, the prosperity, the civilization, and the freedom of a nation. It will develope her internal resources, revive her manufactures, extend her commerce, foster her agriculture, diminish her taxation, dissipate her poverty ; above all, it will give self-reliance, and union to her people. Is it fancy that foretells these bright results, or is it reason ? I think I can shew that it is the latter. I can shew it by the only arguments which can ever be applied to the prospective condition of nations or individuals ; arguments drawn from analogy—analogy to the affairs of private men—to the history of other nations ; but especially, and above all, to the history of Ireland herself.

The analogy between the affairs of a nation and those of an individual is, of course, of limited extent—notwithstanding, it is still considerable. Nations being nothing else than aggregations of individuals, it follows, that generally that which contributes most to the prosperity of the individual, contributes most to the prosperity of the nation likewise. If it be true, as it undoubtedly is, that a man will manage his own business, if labouring under no personal incapacity, better and cheaper, than another man will do it for him, there is no reason whatever why the same principle should not hold good in respect to a nation. Men, whether individually or collectively, have little desire to take upon themselves gratuitous labour. If any person offered, out of pure regard, to take the whole management of your affairs, and to save you all annoyance in respect to them, would you not at once conclude that he intended to plunder you ? Why not act on the same principle when nations are concerned ? There never was a truer saying than that of Porter, that “ No nation ever yet governed another for nothing.”

Whether the government of Ireland by England be good or bad, it is certainly dearer than self-government would be. But may it not be better than self-government? Most certainly not, (unless Irishmen be an inferior race,) for assuming it to be the interest of England to govern Ireland *in the best possible manner*, it surely is the interest of Irishmen to do the same. If, therefore, they are satisfied to leave the control of their affairs in the hands of England, they must be satisfied to pay more for a government, which *may* be worse, and cannot be better than self-government. But not only may English government be worse for Ireland than self-government, but it must be so. England, in the first place, will never be convinced, that it is her interest to govern Ireland in the best manner, until the discovery will be too late, for she gains great temporary benefit by the misgovernment of her;\* and in the second place, Englishmen can never understand the affairs of Ireland, equally well with Irishmen, and therefore never can legislate equally well upon them. A still stronger proof of the advantages to be derived by Ireland from home legislation, is to be drawn from the history of other countries. A very slight examination of this will shew us, that the prosperity of every nation is in almost exact ratio to the amount of control it possesses over its own affairs. Nor can it be contended, that the coincidence of prosperity and self-government is accidental. Countries which have languished and decayed under the management of foreign states, we shall find to have grown rich and healthful when legislating for themselves. Nations, powerful and prosperous, beneath domestic institutions, have sunk by the same gradations into provincialism and insignificance. The prosperity of the seven united provinces after their revolt from Spain, of Portugal since she threw off the yoke of the same country, of the Swiss Cantons freed from the tyranny of Austria, of the American States emancipated from British domination, of Norway since her noble assertion of independence, on the transfer of her sovereignty from the Danish to the Swedish crown, shews under almost every mode of government, and every variety of time and circumstances

\* There is no better established truth in political economy, than that it is the *interest* of all nations to carry on their intercourse with each other, in the manner most beneficial to each. It is clearly and beautifully shewn by Adam Smith, and is the grand principle on which free trade rests. One nation may gain great temporary advantage in trading with another, so as to realise vast profit, but in the end it destroys its customer. Its conduct resembles that of the Norwegians, who rob the nests of the Eider goose for its beautiful and valuable down, with which it lines them. When one nest is robbed, it builds a second and lays again, and if this be stolen, a third; but it generally dies from the exhaustion of laying, no young birds being hatched;—the cupidity of its plunderers thus yearly diminishing their own gains.



the blessings of self-control ; while the history of the same states in their provincial capacity, of Corsica, of Sicily, and of Lombardy, gives ample proof of the evils resulting from foreign rule, in every possible form.\*

But it is in the history of Ireland herself, that we find the unanswerable arguments in favor of her legislative independence. It is that which call for our strictest investigation. However close may be the analogy between her and other countries, that analogy can never be complete: differences of geographical situation, of national character, of soil, of climate, *must* exist to render the comparison unfair; an hundred other discrepancies, as forms of government, religion, industrial pursuits *may* be superadded, so as to destroy all resemblance. In spite of all these dissimilarities, the political philosopher may, indeed, learn much from inquiring into their relative progress; but the task is difficult, and the deduction arrived at, at best, uncertain. Fortunately, we are not under the necessity of undergoing so tiresome an examination, and we have *data* which must bring us to a far more certain result. We have, within the space of half a century—a space far too short to affect the conclusions to be drawn from it—the experience of Ireland provincialised—Ireland emancipated, and Ireland provincialised again: let us make this our study, and abide by what it teaches. The half-century of Irish history, which contains within it all that is necessary for our investigation, lies between the year 1778 and the year 1818; upon it Ireland may rest her claim for self-government; but Great Britain shall have the benefit of all that has occurred from the latter period to our own time; and for the better understanding of the subject, I shall commence the review of the state of Ireland, and the connexion of the two countries, at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The political position of Ireland at this period, was that of complete dependence on Great Britain. Her parliament was little else than a nullity, or, at best, a convenient instrument for effecting the designs of the English ministers. When a doubt existed, that it would be found manageable—sometimes even without this apology, but merely through indifference—it was superseded altogether. “In so much diffidence and contempt,” says Plowden,† “did the

\* The reader must consult the history of these different countries, and judge for himself of the truth of what is here asserted, with regard to them. Details of their advancement or retrogression would, in a work like this, of course, be impossible. Belgium and Scotland are not mentioned in the above list. Many circumstances make it desirable to go into a careful examination of the history and position of both these countries and this will be found fully in another place.

† Vol. i. p. 229, Quarto Edition, 1803. Plowden having written expressly, and at Pitt's desire, to sustain the Union, is an unexceptionable authority.



British Parliament hold that of Ireland during this Queen's reign, (Anne's,) that in every matter which was considered to be of importance to the British empire, they expressly legislated for Ireland, as if Ireland had no parliament of her own. Thus did the British legislature direct the sale of the estates of Irish rebels, and disqualify Catholics from purchasing them; thus did it avoid leases made to Papists; thus augment small vicarages, and confirm grants made to the Archbishop of Dublin; it permitted Ireland to export linen to the Plantations;\* prohibited the importation of that commodity from Scotland, and appointed the town of New Ross, in the county of Wexford, as the port for exporting wool from Ireland to England. In the Schism Act which Sir William Wyndham brought into the House of Commons in England, in the year 1714, the interference of the British legislature with Ireland was the most remarkable. This bill, which was aimed by the Tory party at the total suppression of the Dissenters, was warmly opposed by the Whigs in both houses. Into that bill the following clause was introduced: that 'where law is the same, the remedy and means for enforcing the execution of the law should be the same: be it therefore enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that all and every the remedies, provisions, and clauses, in and by this act given, made, and enacted, shall extend and be deemed, construed, and adjudged to extend to Ireland, in as full and effectual manner as if Ireland had been expressly named and mentioned in all and every the clauses of this act.'

The opponents of the bill fought hard against the clause relating to Ireland, contending that it would ruin the general Protestant interest there, by converting the Dissenters into bitter enemies, but it passed notwithstanding. "It must," continues Mr. Plowden,† "be presumed, that the ministers of that day were as anxious that the bill against the Dissenters should be extended to Ireland, as they were certain that a similar bill would not have passed the Irish Parliament."‡

The extracts here given, demonstrate, not only the complete and servile dependence of the Irish Parliament upon that of Great Britain; but likewise, the vile uses to which the British Minister converted that dependence.

The star of religious intolerance was, at this period, at its zenith

\* The conduct of England with reference to the linen and woollen manufactures of Ireland, has been well shewn by Mr. John O'Connell, in his 'Argument for Ireland.'

† Vol. 1. p. 230.

‡ It would seem, that the House of Lords were ready enough to persecute the Dissenters; but that the Commons were not so complying.

in Ireland. The *act to prevent the further growth of Popery*, "through which," says Dr. Curry,\* "there runs such a vein of ingenious cruelty, that it seems to be dictated rather by some Prætor of Dioclesian than by a British or Irish nobleman,"—was passed early in the reign of Anne; and throughout the whole of that reign the Penal Laws were executed with unabating severity. Nor were the Roman Catholics the only objects of persecution. By a clause in the act, just alluded to, the *sacramental test*—as it has been termed—or the receiving the Lord's Supper, according to the rites of the Church of Ireland, was made a condition of executing any public trust for her Majesty or the country. Under this clause the Presbyterian burgesses of Belfast were declared by the House of Commons incapacitated from voting in elections for members of parliament, unless they should fulfil its provisions:† nor could all their exertions obtain a repeal of the obnoxious condition. Nay, more, the increasing influence of the Presbyterians was viewed "with such dread and jealousy, that on the 7th November, 1711, the lords spiritual and temporal presented an address to her Majesty, in which they complained of the Earl of Wharton (the Lord Lieutenant), having abused her Majesty's name in ordering *nolle prosequi* to stop proceedings against one Fleming and others *for disturbing the peace of the town of Drogheda, by setting up a Meeting-house where there had been none for the last twenty-eight years*;"‡ set forth various acts of the Dissenters hostile to the Established Church; amongst others "sending Missionaries into several parts of the kingdom, where they had no call, nor any congregations to support them;" and besought her Majesty to take away from them the sum of £1,200 per annum given them by her for charitable purposes. These facts, respecting which no controversy can exist, convey a melancholy idea of the state of civil and religious liberty in Ireland under her dependent Parliament. Let us consider her now in her other relations.

In the reign of George I. (anno 1719), the House of Lords, in Ireland, reversed a decision of the Irish Court of Exchequer§ upon appeal. The defeated party appealed from the Irish to the English House of Lords, which confirmed the decision of the Exchequer; and an injunction was issued out of that Court, pursuant to the order of the English Peers. The Sheriff of Kildare, to whom the writ issued refused to obey it, and was fined twelve hundred pounds by the Exchequer. Thereupon he petitioned the House of Lords in Ireland, who resolved "that

\* Vol. 2, p. 234.

† Plowden 1, p. 222.

‡ Common's Journ., vol. 2, p. 569.

§ *Sherlock v. Annesley*.

Alexander Burrows, Esq., in not obeying the injunction issued from his Majesty's Court of Exchequer, in the cause between Annesley and Sherlock, had behaved himself with integrity and courage, and with due respect to the orders and resolutions of the house ;—that the fines imposed upon him be taken off: that the barons of the Exchequer, viz.—Jeffrey Gilbert, Esq.; John Pocklington, Esq.; and Sir John St. Leger, had acted in violation of the orders of the house, in ‘diminution of the King’s’ Prerogative, as also of the rights and privileges of the kingdom of Ireland and the Parliament thereof.” They further ordered that the barons of the Exchequer should be taken into custody by the Usher of the black rod, which orders were accordingly executed. The Lords having asserted their privilege in this manner, next forwarded to the King a long and elaborate representation of the rights which they claimed as a final court of appeal in Irish causes, setting forth in full the arguments on which they rested their claim, and concluding with the expression of a hope that his Majesty would justify the steps they had taken, for supporting his prerogative and the just rights and liberties of themselves and their fellow-subjects.

The representation and proceedings of the Irish House of Lords having been laid before the English house, the latter, instead of abandoning the appellate jurisdiction which they had assumed, passed resolutions approving of the conduct of the Irish Court of Exchequer in carrying their judgment into effect; and agreed on presenting an humble address to his Majesty to confer on the barons of that court some mark of his royal favor, as a recompense for the injuries they had received by being unjustly censured and illegally imprisoned for doing their duty.\* The celebrated act, (6 Geo. I., cap. 5,) *for better securing the dependency of the kingdom of Ireland upon the Crown of Great Britain*, was then brought in at the desire of the British Peers and passed both houses by large majorities. It declared that the kingdom of Ireland was wholly subordinate to and dependent on the Crown of Great Britain; that the British Parliament had full power to enact laws to bind it; that all claim of appellate jurisdiction by the Irish House of Lords, was unfounded, and all proceedings thereon null and void to all intents and purposes whatsoever.

The miserable dependence to which the Irish Legislature (if indeed the name can be applied to it) was reduced by this act, having been submitted to for a period of sixty years, let us now turn to

\* The address was probably successful in its object. Baron Gilbert was transferred to the English Exchequer in 1722, and appointed Lord Chief Baron of that Court, in 1725.



the consideration of the social and financial condition of the country during that space of time.

The first authority I shall cite is Dean Swift, who published his 'Short View of the State of Ireland,' in the year 1727-28. Having enumerated the advantages possessed by Ireland in fruitfulness of soil, excellence of harbours, population, &c., he proceeds\*—"the conveniency of ports and havens, which nature bestowed us so liberally, is of no more use to us, than a beautiful prospect to a man shut up in a dungeon.

"As to shipping of its own, this kingdom is so utterly unprovided, that of all the excellent timber cut down within these fifty or sixty years, it can hardly be said that the nation hath received the benefit of one ship to trade with.

"Ireland is the only kingdom I ever heard or read of in ancient or modern story, which was denied the liberty of exporting their native commodities wherever they pleased, except to countries at war with their own prince or state. Yet this, by the superiority of meer power, is refused to us in the most momentous parts of commerce; besides an act of navigation, to which we never consented, pinned down upon us, and rigorously executed, and a thousand other unexampled circumstances as grievous as they are invidious to mention.

"No strangers from other countries make this a part of their travels, *where they can expect to see nothing but scenes of misery and desolation.*

"*Those who have the misfortune to be born here, have the least title to any considerable employment,* to which they are seldom preferred, but upon a political consideration.

"The third part of the rents of Ireland is spent in England, which, with the profit of employments, pensions, appeals, journies of pleasure or health, education at the Inns of Court and both Universities, remittances at pleasure, the pay of all superior officers in the army and other incidents, will amount to a full half of the income of the whole kingdom, all clear profit to England.

"We are denied the liberty of coining gold, silver, or even copper. In the Isle of Man, they coin their own silver; every petty prince, vassal to the Emperor can coin what money he pleaseth, and in this, as in most of the articles already mentioned, we are an exception to all other states or monarchies that were ever known in the world."

\* Short View, &c., 1st ed., p. 8.



Well, indeed, might he add, that to flourish in such a state of things would be “against every law of nature and reason, like the thorn of Glassenbury, which blossoms in the middle of winter.”

After the extracts just given, we cannot doubt the fidelity of the picture which follows:—

“A stranger would be apt to think himself travelling in Lapland or Iceland, rather than in a country so favored by nature as ours, both in fruitfulness of soil and temperature of climate. The miserable dress, and diet, and dwelling of the people: the general desolation in most parts of the kingdom: the old seats of the nobility and gentry all in ruins, and no new ones in their stead: the families of farmers, who pay great rents, living in filth and nastiness upon buttermilk and potatoes, without a shoe or stocking to their feet, or a house so convenient as an English hog-stye to receive them: these indeed may be comfortable sights to an English spectator, who comes for a short time only *to learn the language*, and returns back to his own country, whither he finds all our wealth transmitted—

‘nostrâ miserâ magnus es.’

“The rise of our rents is squeezed out of the very blood, and vitals, and cloaths, and dwellings of the tenants who live worse than English beggars. The lowness of interest, in all other countries a sign of wealth, is in ours a proof of misery, there being no trade to employ any borrower. Hence alone comes the dearness of land, since the savers have no other way to lay out their money. Hence the dearness of the necessaries of life, because the tenants cannot afford to pay such extravagant rates for land (*which they must take or go a-begging*), without raising the price of cattle, and of corn, *although they should live upon chaff*.”

The evidence of such a man as Swift can hardly require corroboration; but as he was an Irishman writing on behalf of his country, and at least obnoxious to the charge of *patriotism*, I will cite additional testimony to the wretchedness which he has painted.

On the 7th March, 1727, Primate Boulter, an Englishman, wrote thus to the Duke of Newcastle:—

“Since I came here in the year 1725, there was almost a famine amongst the poor; last year the dearness of corn was such, that thousands of families quitted their habitations to seek bread elsewhere, *and many hundreds perished*. This year the poor had consumed their potatoes, which are their winter subsistence, near two months sooner than ordinary, and are already, through the dearness

of corn, in that want, that in some places they begin to quit their habitations.”\*

“The misery thus described, went on increasing from year to year, till,” says Plowden,† “in the years 1728, and 1729, it nearly amounted to a famine.” In the six months ending the 29th of September in the latter year, it appears from the report of the House of Commons, that the import of corn amounted to £247,000, a sum truly exorbitant, when compared with the finances of the country, at the time, the state of which I shall presently examine. Nor is it merely in his representations of the state of the poor, that Primate Boulter corroborates the testimony of Swift. In another letter to the Duke of Newcastle, he says, “I must request of your Grace, as I have of his Lordship, (Carteret, Lord Lieutenant,) that you would both use your interest *to have none but Englishmen put into the great places here for the future.*”‡ The advice thus given was faithfully followed up, and everything else long sacrificed to the preservation of an *English interest* in Ireland.

It may, however, be supposed that this *English interest* and *Protestant interest* were, at the time, synonymous terms, and that the Roman Catholics were the only real sufferers from the conduct of the English authorities in Ireland. This idea was indeed, upon all public occasions, sought to be impressed upon the Protestants, by the party who derived all the benefit of the existing state of things; but what was the fact? I quote Primate Boulter again as my authority. In another letter to the Duke of Newcastle, dated 23rd November, 1728, in which he sets forth the distressed condition of the country, and the emigration which it had given rise to, (3,100 persons having, in the preceding summer, been shipped to the West Indies,) he continues “the whole north is in a ferment at present, and people every day engaging one another to go next year to the West Indies. The humour has spread like a contagious distemper, and the people will hardly hear anybody, that tries to cure them of their madness. *The worst is, that it affects only Protestants, and reigns chiefly in the North*, which is the seat of our linen manufacture.” Can it be necessary to adduce further authorities for the universal distress of the country? If it be, let us turn from the statements of individuals to the financial accounts of the period.

“Nothing,” says Plowden,§ “can convey a more adequate idea of the financial state of the nation, than to consider the progress of the national debt, and trace the effects which it gradually produced on

\* Cor. Pri. Boulter, vol. 1. p. 226.

† Cor. Pri. Boulter, vol. 1. p. 23.

‡ Vol. 1. p. 267.

§ Vol. 1. p. 278.

the nation. The poverty of Ireland appeared in the year 1716, by the unanimous address of the House of Commons to George I. This address was to congratulate his Majesty on his success in extinguishing the rebellion; an occasion most joyful to them, and in which no disagreeable circumstance would have been stated, had not truth and the necessities of their country extorted it from them. A small debt of £16,106, 11s. 0½d. due at Michaelmas 1715, was, by their exertions to strengthen the hands of government, in that year, increased at Midsummer, 1717, to a sum of £91,537 17s. 1½d. which was considered such an augmentation of the national debt, that the Lord Lieutenant, the Duke of Bolton, thought it necessary to take notice in his speech from the throne, that the debt was considerably augmented, and to declare at the same time that his Majesty had ordered reductions in the military, and had thought proper to lessen the civil list. "*There cannot be a stronger proof,*" continues Mr. Plowden, "*of the want of resources in any country, than that a debt of so small amount should alarm the persons entrusted with the government of it,*" an observation in the truth of which every man must agree. In 1733, the debt had further increased to £371,312 13s. 2½d. and this without any war contributions on the part of Ireland, but solely from her poverty and absence of resources. After the peace of Aix la-chapelle, her financial condition improved, and the linen trade became somewhat flourishing, so that through great exertion, she succeeded in paying off her debt altogether by the 1st March, 1754.

A few years previously to this, the descendants of the English resident in Ireland, and possessed of influence there, began to perceive that they were too far identified with her interests and dependent on her prosperity, to continue any longer the old system of governing for England, and a strong Irish party sprung up in the parliament and the country. The efforts of this party produced some good effects in the management of public affairs, and in the year 1759, the country appears from the public accounts to have been *in credit* £65,774 4s. 1½d. The symptoms of prosperity, however, which appeared after the peace, unluckily proved fallacious: its continuance was of short duration. In 1760, considerable addition was made to the military force of the kingdom, and parliament was compelled to raise a loan in that year of £300,000, in addition to £150,000 which it had borrowed at the close of the previous year. The patriots, though by their exertions they had forced many important measures upon the government, which I shall notice in another place, were unable to introduce any considerable financial reform, and the result was a steady and



progressive increase of the public debt. At Lady Day, 1773, *after a ten years peace*, it amounted to £994,890 10s. 10d. and in December 1781, it was stated by Mr. Grattan to be £2,667,600.

The increase in a nation's debt is not in itself a conclusive proof of national distress. In time of war, a government will borrow money to meet its immediate expenses, relying upon the surplus revenue, which a succeeding peace is likely to leave in the treasury, for payment of the debt so contracted, in preference to imposing additional taxes on the country, to meet those expenses as they are incurred. In such a case it resembles a private person, possessed of an income, more than sufficient for his ordinary expenditure, who requiring a large sum of money for a specific purpose, borrows it with the intention of paying it off by degrees out of the income which he receives over and above his wants. Even in time of peace, an increase of debt may not be a proof positive of financial ruin. A country advancing in commerce and wealth may borrow, upon the credit of its increasing revenues, to meet the exigencies of government, as an individual may live beyond his income, if his property be daily improving in value, and yet be prosperous and flourishing in reality. This, however, was not the case of Ireland during the long period we have been considering. The distress of the community, if it did not keep pace with, at least did not remain far behind that of the treasury. In a debate in the English House of Commons on the 10th May, 1776, the Hon. Temple Luttrell, speaking of the Irish, said, that "a people so wretched, so oppressed, were scarcely to be found in any part of the civilized globe." In the following year petitions were presented to the Irish parliament from the merchants and traders of Cork, and from the manufacturers of Dublin, setting forth in the most painful manner the ruinous condition of their respective districts. The latter class stated in their petition, that, by their efforts, "*aided by the liberal benefactions of many others, they had daily supplied the craving necessities of above 20,000 persons, numbers of whom, must else have actually perished for want of food,*"\* and in every quarter similar wretchedness was to be encountered.

Again, on the 16th December, 1778, Lord Nugent, in the British House of Commons, described the people of Ireland, "as suffering every species of misery and distress human nature was capable of bearing; a people, nine-tenths of whom laboured for four pence a day; whose food in summer was potatoes and buttermilk, and in winter potatoes and water."† He was followed by Lord Beau-

\* 1 Plowden, p. 448, note.

† Ibid. 471.



champ, who confirmed nearly all his statements on the subject. On the 19th of January, 1779, he renewed the discussion of the state of Ireland, (with the design of having some of the restrictions on her trade removed,) and stated, amongst other matters, that "good estates in that country were offered to sale at sixteen and fourteen years' purchase, yet no buyers appeared at that low price;" and referred to "a letter he had received from Dr. Woodward, Dean of Clogher, mentioning that all had been done, that could be effected by contribution, to relieve the starving poor, but in vain."\* Finally, as substantiating all the representations which had been made by individuals, on the 18th May, 1779, Lord North communicated the following message from the King to the British House of Commons:—" (George R.)—His Majesty having received information from the Earl of Buckinghamshire, his Lieutenant-General and General Governor of his Kingdom of Ireland, that the revenues of that kingdom have of late proved greatly deficient, and inadequate to the purposes for which they were granted; and his Majesty, moved with concern and compassion for the distresses of his loyal and faithful subjects of that kingdom, and being anxious that some immediate and effectual relief should be afforded to them, thinks it necessary to recommend to the consideration of this House, whether it may not be proper, in the present circumstances of Ireland, that the whole charge of the regiments on the Irish establishment, now serving out of that kingdom, should be paid by Great Britain.—G. R."†

Having now, as I conceive, adduced authorities sufficient in number and value, to satisfy the most incredulous, that the state of Ireland, down to the year 1780, under the rule of her dependent parliament, was disastrous in the last degree, I shall ask the reader to retrace his steps, for a more pleasing purpose than that of contemplating scenes of bigotry and want. The sturdy and patriotic spirit which was so soon about to change the whole aspect of the country, had begun its attacks on the system of English misrule about forty years before the time at which we have arrived. Indeed, so early as 1727, "there were some, who," says Plowden, "assuming the title of patriots, solemnly protested against any *foreign* ascendancy over the native rights and interests of their country." The first symptoms of the independent feeling thus manifested, were, as usual, accompanied by a forgetfulness of religious animosities, and "the Irish Catholics, though deprived of most of the civil rights, which their Protestant brethren enjoyed, sympathised with them in

\* 1 Plowden, p. 472.

† Ibid. 475.

their efforts to preserve the rights of Ireland, and in defiance of religious differences, began to make *civil* liberty a common cause with them.”\* The guardians of the English interest were however on the alert; their power had been only threatened, not yet shaken, and they struck a sudden, and, for the time, a decisive blow. “*This novel coalition† between Protestants and Catholics,*” continues Plowden, “*in support and defence of the interests of Ireland, became formidably alarming to that party, whose sole mission was to keep up an English interest in that kingdom.*” Government foresaw the necessary progress of this native coalition against the English interest, and at one blow put an end to the political existence of, at least, four-fifths of the nation, by depriving them of the noblest birthright, and invaluable privilege of the subject.” By a single clause introduced into a bill, threatening no additional restrictions on the Roman Catholics, they were suddenly robbed of the elective franchise, and the patriotic party deprived at once of their most valuable support. Notwithstanding this success on the part of government, the patriots steadily persevered in their exertions. During the administration of Lord Carteret, in 1729, “the Court party had moved in the Commons, that the fund which had been provided for the payment of the principal and interest of the National Debt, should be granted to his Majesty, his heirs, and successors for ever, redeemable by parliament. The patriots insisted successfully, that it was unconstitutional, and inconsistent with the public safety, to grant it for a longer term than from session to session. An attempt was afterwards made to vest it in the Crown, by continuing the supplies for twenty-one years. A division took place on this question, and the patriots succeeded by a majority of one.” In 1751, they were again triumphant, in asserting the principle that the House of Commons had a right to pass an act disposing of the surplus of the hereditary revenue without the *previous* consent of the Crown. In 1756, they were, it is true, in a minority of 59 to 85, on a bill brought in for better securing the freedom of parliament, by vacating the seats of such members of the House of Commons, as should accept of any pension or civil office of profit; but even this, when we consider the extent of the system of corruption then resorted to for the purpose of securing ministerial majorities, is strongly indicative of the progress of public honesty. In 1767, a far higher degree of success attended the efforts of the patriots; they obtained the passing of the Octennial Bill, reducing the privilege of members of the House of Commons

\* Vol. 1, p. 265.

† Ibid. 268.

to sit in parliament, to eight years, it having previously been for life. The bill had originally been septennial, but it had been altered in the British Cabinet, "it having been expected," says Mr. Plowden, "that the violent tenaciousness of the Irish Commons for the privilege of not having their heads of bills altered on this (*i. e.* the English) side of the water, would have induced them to reject any bill, into which such an alteration had been introduced."\* The trick was, however, seen through by the parliament, and they passed the bill with the alteration, so anxious were they, constitutionally, to limit the duration of their powers. In order, however, to shew their resolve to maintain their privileges, they at the same time rejected a bill for securing the independence of the judges, on the express ground of an alteration having been similarly made in it. The new house having met in 1769, at once took issue on the right of originating measures in the privy council. A money bill having been brought into the House of Commons, it was moved, that it be rejected, because it had not its rise in that house, and the motion was carried, and the bill thrown out by a majority of 94 against 71. An article having appeared in the London Public Advertiser of the 9th December, 1769, abusing, in very insolent terms, the Irish House of Commons for this assertion of its privileges, and calling on the British Parliament to vote the Irish supplies, "as they had an undoubted right," it was moved on the 18th of that month, in the Irish Commons, that it should be read, which having been done, it was declared to be a false and infamous libel on the proceedings of that house, and ordered to be burned by the common hangman, which was accordingly done on the following Wednesday in the presence of the sheriffs of Dublin. In 1775, the House of Commons once more shewed its independence by negating a proposal of government to introduce foreign troops into the kingdom, by a majority of 106 against 68; and also rejected a bill, imposing additional duties on ale, beer, &c., as well as a stamp act, the ground for the rejection of these latter bills being, that they were altered in England.

The advances made by the patriots, were thus steadily increasing; but the Roman Catholics had, since the passing of the disfranchising act, been politically powerless. The first step taken towards their relief, was in the month of May 1778, when a motion was made in the Irish House of Commons for leave to bring in a bill for the purpose, which motion was carried in the affirmative. The bill in question, permitted any Roman Catholic taking the Oath of Allegiance prescribed by the 13 & 14 Geo. III., to take and dispose of a



lease for 999 years, certain or determinable on the dropping of five lives; and declared, that the lands held by Roman Catholics, should be descendible, devisable, and alienable, in the same manner as if held by any other person. It passed both houses, and received the royal assent, the first act of justice to the vast majority of the Irish people, which, for nearly a century, had been wrung from their oppressors.

In 1779, Ireland, from the accumulated distresses of her inhabitants, the extent of which has been already shewn, and the exertions of the patriotic party, began to assume an attitude still more menacing to British domination. The country had been, two years before this period, drained of its troops, which were required for the foreign service of the empire, and being entirely defenceless, volunteer bodies of armed men had associated themselves together to supply the place of the soldiery which had been withdrawn.—These volunteers were men, for the most part sensible of the evils which English ascendancy had inflicted on their country, and largely inspired with the free sentiments of the patriots. The example of America, which had so recently revolted from British rule, animated them, while it, to an equal extent, depressed their rulers; and when the demands and necessities of the country were brought before the British Parliament in this year, several of its members spoke plainly of the dangers to be apprehended from the continuance of that policy which had been theretofore habitually adopted in her behalf. Ministers, however, did nothing, and the affairs of Ireland were left unattended to during the session; which closed without any measure having been passed for her benefit. When the Irish people found that their wants were thus neglected, they resolved to try what they could, by their own efforts, effect. They formed associations which pledged themselves against the importation of British commodities, and resolved to encourage and consume native manufactures only. These resolutions were first entered into in Dublin, and were rapidly followed up in other parts of the kingdom. The spirit of the people had been caught up by their representatives. When the House of Commons met in November, they had resolved to grant the supplies for only a limited period, and accordingly passed a six-months money-bill, which they transmitted to England where, to his great mortification, the minister was obliged to assent to it. They had, moreover, unanimously passed resolutions in favor of free-trade; and on the 24th of November, the question being put “that it be resolved, that at this time, it would be inexpedient to grant new taxes;” it was carried in the affirmative by a majority of 170 to 47.

The determination of Ireland had, in all respects, begun to operate favourably for her. "The firm measure of a six months' money-bill, the non-importation agreement, and the armed associations, had produced a wonderful change in the public mind throughout Great Britain, with reference to her affairs;"\* and accordingly Lord North having, in a committee of the British House of Commons, on the 13th of November, brought forward three propositions, relative to allowing her a free export of her wool, woollens, and wool-flocks—of glass, and all kinds of glass manufactures, and a freedom of trade with the British plantations on certain conditions, the basis of which was to be an equality of taxes and customs upon an equal and unrestrained trade: bills founded on the two first propositions were brought in, passed both houses with the utmost facility and received the royal assent before the recess. The third being more complex in its nature, and requiring more time for consideration, was allowed to lie over as an open proposition during the ensuing holidays.†

Meanwhile, the Volunteer associations were daily becoming more formidable. At the close of 1779, they had been computed to number 30,000 men, self-equipped and strictly disciplined. "In the beginning of 1780, they entered upon the plan of general organization: they appointed reviews for the ensuing summer; and chose their exercising officers and reviewing generals: *and thus,*" says Plowden, "*the foundation of Irish Union was laid.*" The resolutions of many of the corps, declaring that Ireland was an independent kingdom, entitled to all the uncontrolled rights and immunities attaching thereto, filled the newspapers. The sentiment was responded to by the whole Irish people, and on the 19th of April, in that year, Mr. Grattan, after a most animated speech, moved in the House of Commons, that they should resolve, and enter on their journals "*that no power on earth, save the King Lords and Commons of Ireland, had a right to make laws for Ireland.*" A debate arose on the motion which lasted until six in the morning, in which every man, but one, "acknowledged its truth, either expressly or by not opposing it;" but at the instance of Mr. Flood, who feared that the ministerial hacks were numerous enough to defeat it, if a division took place, it was withdrawn by its mover.

Ministers themselves, indeed, seem to have, at this time, been fully confident of the subserviency of their minions—and so far as it could avail them in their attacks on Irish liberty, they did not miscalculate. A mutiny bill sent over, as usual, was returned by the English Privy Council, altered by being made *perpetual*; and

\* Plowden, vol. 1., p. 512.

† Ibid.

the Irish House of Commons, in the month of August passed it in its altered and unconstitutional form. A bill relating to sugar was altered in England in a like manner. The people out of doors became clamorous, the Volunteers menacing: but the session closed, on the 2nd of September, without any further step having been taken towards the attainment of Irish independence.

The Volunteers—the safeguard of Ireland—with arms in their hands, were, however, alike unassailable, by ministerial menace or corruption; and they now had no other object than the attainment of a free and independent constitution. “Their reviews in 1780,” says Mr. Plowden, “had pointed out the utility of forming regiments: it was clearly perceived that companies acting separately could never attain military perfection. In the spring of 1781, reviews were again fixed on; and in summer when they assembled, the improved state of the Volunteers was obvious to every eye. The reviews were everywhere more numerous, more military and more splendid. That of Belfast, which in 1780 was the largest, had, in 1781, nearly doubled their number; 5,383 men then appeared in review, with a train of thirteen field pieces; other reviews had proportionably increased and improved; the Volunteers engaged the affection and commanded the admiration of all their countrymen.”\*

On the 9th of October, 1781, parliament assembled. On the 10th Mr. Bradstreet, recorder of Dublin and a staunch patriot, moved for and obtained leave to prepare and bring in a *Habeas Corpus* bill, no act of the kind having previously existed in Ireland! Sir Lucius O’Brien, spoke of the neglect which had been exhibited by England towards Ireland in reference to the trade of the latter country with Portugal, and was followed by Mr. Yelverton, who commented on the omission of all allusion in the speech from the throne to this important subject: while in its stead were recommendations respecting Protestant charter-schools, making of roads and other matters, more fit for the consideration of a county grand jury than for the great inquest of a nation. He further alluded to the miserable state of Ireland, and said it must continue “so long as a monster unknown to the constitution, a British Attorney-General through the influence of a law of Poyning’s, had power to alter their bills.” On the 29th of October, on the re-assembling of parliament after the recess, the Portugal trade question was a second time brought before the house, in discussing a petition presented by Mr. Recorder Bradstreet, from the merchants’ guild of Dublin,

\* Vol. 1. p. 529.



and Sir Lucius O'Brien again spoke upon it. "He was sorry," he said, "to see the business conducted in a timid manner, and in the hands of persons not interested in their welfare, but with a secondary view, who, at most, would only promote it when it did not clash with the convenience of a neighbouring nation. He thought that granting the supplies for six months only, would be the most likely method of bringing the business to a happy issue." From these remarks some idea may be formed of the tone of the independent party in Parliament, which was in complete unison with that of the whole population outside.

The independent party in the House of Commons, however, did not at this time form a very numerous body. "The activity of the Castle," says Mr. Plowden,\* "to ensure a majority in parliament, kept pace with the increase of patriotism out of it. But this system in the new ferment of the public mind, became daily less efficient, and was ill suited to the existing disposition of the country. The people had arms, had power and a determination to be free; they knew the use of their arms, and had imbibed a uniform and steady resolve not to quit them till they had attained the object of their wishes, a free and independent constitution. It was obvious, that a parliament marshalled as that was to resist the demands of the people, might irritate, but could not control the wishes of their constituents. Administration confiding in their number, set all the patriotic attempts at defiance, and frustrated or negatived all their demands and claims. They thus pitted this factitious majority against the mass of their armed countrymen who now beheld them with indignation, and considered them, in fact, the only enemy they had to encounter in Ireland."

On the 11th December, 1781, Mr. Flood in a most able speech brought the subject of Poyning's law, before parliament, and having gone into an elaborate history of its origin, and of the amount of usurpation of power, which it had given rise to, on the part of Great Britain, in reference to Ireland, moved, "that a committee be appointed to examine the precedents and records that day produced, and such others as might be necessary to explain the law of Poyning's." This motion, was, however negatived by the house, the majority for ministers being 139 against 67.

On the 31st. of January, 1782, Mr. Luke Gardiner, afterwards Lord Mountjoy, gave notice of his intention to bring in a bill for the further relief of the Roman Catholics, and many of the best and ablest members of the house, spoke in the highest terms of

\* Ibid, p. 535.

their conduct, referring especially to their zealous co-operation with their protestant fellow-countrymen in the attempt to secure Irish liberty, notwithstanding the wretched position in which they themselves were placed. In the debate on the bill, on the 5th February, like sentiments were expressed by nearly all the speakers. The Attorney-general, Mr. Scott, who supported it, mentioned facts which it is gratifying to record, as shewing the kindly feeling that had grown up amongst all classes of religionists. "He was particularly happy," he said "in hearing the sentiments of toleration, which had been expressed by gentlemen, who represented the northern countries ; on that subject their opinions should have the greatest weight, and as there were no men who valued liberty higher, there were none who would be more forward to bestow it on their countrymen. He had himself been a witness of their wisdom, and the spirit of toleration that reigned amongst them. He had seen in Monaghan, at the same moment, three prodigious large congregations flowing out, from a meeting house, a church, and a mass house, and as the individuals that composed them, had joined in the street, they had blended, and united in one body, with every mark of affection and good will ; that was true religious toleration, and the most striking examples of it were to be found in the north." With such a spirit of freedom, as we have seen was abroad, and so happy an absence of sectarian bigotry, as is evidenced by the matters here alluded to, it was impossible, that Ireland could, much longer, be held in the trammels of provincialism. Her era of independence was now rapidly approaching. On the 28th of December, 1781, a meeting of the Southern battalion of the first Ulster Regiment of Volunteers, (commanded by the Earl of Charlemont,) was held at Armagh, who, having passed resolutions, expressive of their concern, at the desertion of the constitutional rights of the kingdom, by the Irish parliament, convened a general meeting of delegates from all the Volunteer Corps of Ulster, to take place at Dungannon, on the 15th of February following, "then and there to deliberate on the alarming state of public affairs, and to determine on, and publish to their country, what may be the result of said meeting." That bold steps were contemplated by the requisitionists, was pretty evident, from their concluding resolution, which was in these words: "Resolved, that, as it is highly probable the idea of forming brigades, will be agitated and considered, the several corps of Volunteers who send delegates to said meeting, are requested to vest in them a power to associate with some one of such brigades as may be there formed."

The resolutions were published in all the newspapers of the

province, and in the Volunteer Journal of the City of Dublin. The people looked forward to the result with anxiety and hope. The government dared not to interpose. At length the eventful and memorable 15th of February, 1782, arrived. The representatives of one hundred and forty-three corps of volunteers, met in the church of Dungannon, in the sacred names of liberty and fatherland. The destiny of their country was in their keeping, and they acted in a spirit worthy of its guardians. Twenty-one resolutions were agreed to at their meeting, some of which, being of a formal nature, or merely expressive of thanks to individuals, I omit. The following are those which are of a public character, of which there is not one that does not deserve to be lastingly engraven on the hearts of their countrymen:—

#### “ ULSTER VOLUNTEERS.

“ At a meeting of the Representatives of one hundred and forty-three corps of volunteers of the province of Ulster, held at Dungannon, on Friday, the 15th day of February, 1782, Colonel Wm. Irvine, in the Chair.

“ Whereas, it has been asserted, that volunteers, as such, cannot, with propriety, debate or publish their opinions on political subjects, or on the conduct of parliament, or public men.

“ 1.—Resolved, unanimously, that a citizen, by learning the use of arms, does not abandon any of his civil rights.

“ 2.—Resolved, unanimously, that a claim of any body of men, other than the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland, to make laws to bind this kingdom, is unconstitutional, illegal, and a grievance.

“ 3.—Resolved (with one dissenting voice only,) that the powers exercised by the privy council of both kingdoms, under colour or pretence of the law of Poynings, are unconstitutional and a grievance.

“ 4.—Resolved, unanimously, that the ports of this country are, by right, open to all foreign countries, not at war with the King; and that any burthen thereupon, or obstruction thereto, save only by the parliament of Ireland, is unconstitutional, illegal, and a grievance.

“ 5.—Resolved (with one dissenting voice only,) that a mutiny bill, not limited in point of duration, from session to session, is unconstitutional, and a grievance.



“ 6.—Resolved, unanimously, that the independence of judges  
 “ is equally essential to the impartial administration of justice in  
 “ Ireland, as in England; and that the refusal or delay of this  
 “ right to Ireland makes a distinction, where there should be no  
 “ distinction, may excite jealousy, where perfect union should  
 “ prevail; and is, in itself, unconstitutional, and a grievance.

“ 7.—Resolved, (with eleven dissenting voices only,) that it is  
 “ our decided and unalterable determination, to seek a redress  
 “ of these grievances; and we pledge ourselves to each other, and  
 “ to our country, as freeholders, fellow-citizens, and men of honor,  
 “ that we will, at every ensuing election, support those only, who  
 “ have supported, and will support us therein; and that we will  
 “ use all constitutional means to make such our pursuit of redress  
 “ speedy and effectual.

“ 8.—Resolved, (with one dissenting voice only,) that the Right  
 “ Honorable and Honorable the Minority in Parliament, who have  
 “ supported these our constitutional rights, are entitled to our most  
 “ grateful thanks; and that the annexed address be signed by the  
 “ Chairman, and published with these resolutions.

“ 9.—Resolved, unanimously, that four members from each  
 “ county of the province of Ulster, (eleven to be a quorum,) be,  
 “ and are hereby appointed a committee till next general meeting,  
 “ to act for the volunteer corps here represented, and, as occasion  
 “ shall require, to call general meetings of the province; viz.

“ Lord Viscount Enniskillen,  
 “ Colonel Mervyn Archdall,  
 “ Colonel William Irvine,  
 “ Colonel Robert M'Clintock,  
 “ Colonel John Ferguson,  
 “ Colonel John Montgomery,  
 “ Colonel Charles Leslie,  
 “ Colonel Francis Lucas,  
 “ Col. Thomas Morris Jones,  
 “ Colonel James Hamilton,  
 “ Colonel Andrew Thompson,  
 “ Lieut.-Col. Alexander Stewart,  
 “ Major James Patterson  
 “ Major Francis Dobbs,  
 “ Major James M'Clintock,  
 “ Major Charles Duffin.

“ Capt. John Harvey,  
 “ Capt. Robert Campbell,  
 “ Captain Joseph Pollock,  
 “ Capt. Waddell Cunningham,  
 “ Capt. Francis Evans,  
 “ Captain John Cope,  
 “ Captain James Dawson,  
 “ Captain James Atcheson,  
 “ Captain Daniel Eccles,  
 “ Capt. Thomas Dixon,  
 “ Captain David Bell,  
 “ Captain John Coulston,  
 “ Captain Robert Black,  
 “ Rev. Wm. Crawford,  
 “ Mr Robert Thompson,

“ 13.—Resolved, (with two dissenting voices only, to this and

“ the following resolution,) that we hold the right of private judgment in matters of religion, to be equally sacred in others as in ourselves.

“ 14.—Resolved, therefore, that as men, and as Irishmen, as Christians, and as Protestants, we rejoice in the relaxation of the penal laws against our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects; and that we conceive the measure to be fraught with the happiest consequences to the union and prosperity of the inhabitants of Ireland.

“ ADDRESS,

“ To the Right Honorable and Honorable the Minority in both Houses of Parliament.

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ WE thank you for your noble and spirited, though hitherto ineffectual efforts, in defence of the great and commercial rights of your country. Go on! the almost unanimous voice of the people is with you; and, in a free country, the voice of the people must prevail. We know our duty to our sovereign, and are loyal. We know our duty to ourselves, and are resolved to be free. We seek for our rights, and no more than our rights; and in so just a pursuit, we should doubt the being of a Providence, if we doubted of success.

“ Signed by order,

“ WILLIAM IRVINE, Chairman.”

Such were the glorious proceedings of Dungannon. They are above comment; but not beyond imitation. On the 22nd of February, one week after this took place, Mr. Grattan moved, in the House of Commons, an address to his Majesty, embodying the substance of the resolutions, above set forth, declaratory of the Legislative Independence of Ireland, and repudiating the right of Great Britain to bind her by any law whatsoever. The motion was opposed by government, and some specious arguments, addressed to the fears of the members, put forward against it. The Attorney-General, especially, in a very artful speech, reminded the house of the manner in which the declaration, that England had, at no time, a right to make laws for Ireland, might operate on their tenures of property. “ He had looked,” he said, “ over the papers of the forfeited estates, and found that there was scarcely a man in the house who did not enjoy some portion of them, nor a county in Ireland,

of which they did not make a considerable part. A worthy representative of the county of Cavan, held a large property, formerly forfeited, and afterwards granted by an English law. Would he throw a doubt on the validity of his title? Many gentlemen who heard him were in the same situation. Some days ago, the observation of a learned friend of his (Mr. Fitzgibbon) electrified the house, when he told them, that they were about to disturb all property derived under the laws of forfeiture.\* What then must be their feelings, when desired to loose all the bands which unite Society, and leave almost the whole property of the kingdom to be grappled for, by the descendants of the ancient proprietors?" Such arguments, if, of no other value, probably soothed the consciences of the government supporters, and a division having taken place, on an amendment put by the Attorney-General, to adjourn the consideration of the question to the first of August following: the numbers were, for the amendment, 137; for the original motion, 68—majority for government, 69.

It is to be observed that, although the address was opposed by the ministerial party, they at the same time denied, that by that opposition they meant to convey the idea of any present right in Great Britain to bind Ireland by acts of the British parliament. Their object, they said, was merely to avoid anything which might bring into question the validity of past transactions. The independent party, therefore, resolved to try another mode of getting a declaration of the rights of their country; and, accordingly, on the 26th of February, Mr. Flood moved two resolutions.

1st—"That the members of this house are the only representatives of the people of Ireland.

2nd—"That the consent of the commons is indispensably necessary to render any statute binding."

These resolutions the government party also opposed, as being unnecessary, and the Solicitor-General moved, as an amendment, that the words "that it is not now necessary to declare," should be inserted before the words in the original resolutions. The Attorney-General supported the amendment on the above ground, stating at the same time, "that, as an Irishman, and a friend of Great Britain, he would say, that if Great Britain should attempt to make any new laws, they would not be obeyed." Several of those who spoke in favor of the independence of Ireland, took the same view of the question, so, that when it came to a division, the numbers were, for the original motion, 76—for the amendment, 137; the number

\* By the terms of the Roman Catholic Relief Act.



who voted on the government side being exactly the same as in the former division.

Meanwhile the bills for the relief of the Roman Catholics, had been progressing through parliament. Two of them passed both houses, and subsequently became law; one, the 21 & 22 Geo. III. c. 24, intituled “*An Act for the further Relief of His Majesty’s Subjects of this kingdom professing the Roman Catholic Religion*,” by which Catholics, having taken the oath of allegiance under 13th & 14th Geo. III. c. 32, were entitled to take, hold and dispose of lands and hereditaments in the same manner as Protestants, (except advowsons and manors, or boroughs returning members of parliament). Several penalties were also removed by it from such of the clergy as took the oath and were registered, (its operation as regarded the regular clergy being, however, confined to those then in the kingdom). It also repealed the most obnoxious parts of the penal acts of Anne, George the First and George the Second; but clergymen officiating in any church or chapel with a steeple or bell were deprived of the benefit of the act. The second act was intituled “*An Act to allow persons professing the Popish religion to teach school in this kingdom, and for the regulating the education of Papists, and also to repeal parts of certain laws relating to the guardianship of their children*.” This act repealed so much of the acts of William and Anne as imposed on Catholics teaching school, or privately instructing youth in learning, the same pains, penalties and forfeitures, as any Popish regular convict was subject to: but excepting out of its benefit any person who should not have taken the late oath of allegiance, who should receive a Protestant scholar, or who should become an usher, to a Protestant schoolmaster. It also enabled Catholics, (not being ecclesiastics) to be guardians to their own, or any Popish child. The third bill, for authorising intermarriages between Protestants and Roman Catholics, did not become law. The house divided on it, and it was negatived by a majority of eight.

I mention the progress of legislation, in favour of the Roman Catholics, to shew that the principles of liberality in religion advanced steadily in the wake of political independence, as those of bigotry and oppression had followed in the track of slavery. It is right to state also, that to England is due none of the credit of increased toleration. Of the plan for the relief of the Catholics, Mr. Plowden says,\* “certain it is that government gave no direct countenance or support to it, though several supporters of govern-

\* Vol. 1. p. 581.

ment cordially favoured the measure." The merit of it fairly belongs to the Protestants of Ireland, and it should not be forgotten that many of the latter, in the House of Commons, even at this early period, openly and unequivocally declared, "that national justice and national policy demanded the complete emancipation of the Catholics, and a perfect civil amalgamation of the whole Irish people."<sup>\*</sup>

Lord North's administration was now tottering to its fall. On the 14th of March, 1782, the Irish Parliament was adjourned to the 16th of April, before which time a general change took place in the British Ministry, and Mr. Eden (Irish secretary) went over with Lord Carlisle's resignation of the lord lieutenancy. This gentleman, almost immediately on his arrival in England, viz. on the 8th of April, moved in the House of Commons there, a repeal of the declaratory Act 6th Geo. I. so far as it asserted a right in the King and Parliament of Great Britain to bind Ireland. With regard to the precipitancy, with which he urged this step to be taken by the house, he assured them, that it was the absolute and pressing necessity of the case, that must be his excuse. Delay besides was useless, for "in the present state and disposition of Ireland, he would assure the house, that they might as well strive to make the Thames flow up Highbgate Hill, as attempt to legislate for Ireland, which would no longer submit to any legislature but its own." The suddenness with which Mr. Eden's motion was made, and his refusal of all official information to government, respecting the state of Ireland, raised a violent clamour in the house. He, however, pressed his motion—said he was about to return next day to that country, and feared (notwithstanding the statement of Mr. Secretary Fox, that he hoped within the next four and twenty hours to lay a preparatory measure before the house,) that "if the motion was not then carried into execution, it would be too late." The resistance he met with, however, compelled him to abandon it.

On the next day Mr. Fox communicated to the house, the following message from the crown:—

"George R., His Majesty, being concerned to find that discontent and jealousies are prevailing among his loyal subjects in Ireland, upon matters of great weight and importance, earnestly recommends to this house, to take the same into their most serious consideration, in order to such a final adjustment, as may give mutual satisfaction to both kingdoms. G. R."

<sup>\*</sup> Ibid, 582.

The Duke of Portland arrived in Dublin, as new lord lieutenant, on the 14th of April, and was received with demonstrations of enraptured joy. When parliament met on the 16th, "the galleries and bar of the House of Commons were crowded to excess, and expectation was raised to enthusiasm." As soon as the speaker had taken the chair, a message similar to that above given was communicated from the lord lieutenant, by Mr. John Hely Hutchinson, his Majesty's principal secretary of state. He stated his own uniform support of the right of Ireland to self-legislation, and declared that in whatever form it should be proposed, in terms the most unequivocal and explicit, whether by vote, address or bill, it should receive his most cordial support.

Mr. George Ponsonby moved, that a dutiful and loyal address should be presented to his Majesty, thanking him for his most gracious message, and assuring him, that his faithful Commons would immediately proceed upon the just objects he had recommended to their consideration. Mr. Grattan then rose, to mention to the house his reasons for disagreeing in some respect on the form of the motion. "He hoped to induce the house, rather to declare that they had considered the causes of jealousy, and that they were contained in his original motion for a declaration of rights which he would then move as an amendment to the address." He said, "he had nothing to add, but to admire by what steady virtue the people had asserted their rights. He was not very old, and yet he remembered Ireland a child. He had watched her growth: from infancy she grew to arms: from arms to liberty. She was not now afraid of the French; she was not now afraid of the English; she was not now afraid of herself. Her sons were no longer an arbitrary gentry; a ruined commonalty; Protestants oppressing Catholics, Catholics groaning under oppression, but she was now an united land." He then proceeded to review the progress of Ireland to liberty, and concluded a noble speech by moving the following address, which was carried, *nem. com.*

"To return his Majesty the thanks of this house, for his most gracious message to this house, signified by his Grace, the Lord Lieutenant.

"To assure his Majesty, of our unshaken attachment to his Majesty's person and government, and of our lively sense of his paternal care, in thus taking the lead to administer content to his Majesty's subjects in Ireland.

"That thus encouraged by his royal interposition, we shall beg leave, with all duty and affection, to lay before his Majesty the cause of our discontents and jealousies; to assure his Majesty that



his subjects of Ireland, are a free people, that the Crown of Ireland is an imperial one, inseparably annexed to the Crown of Great Britain, on which connexion, the interests and happiness of both nations essentially depend; but that the kingdom of Ireland is a distinct kingdom with a parliament of her own, the sole legislature thereof, that there is no body of men, competent to make laws to bind this nation, except the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland, nor any other parliament which hath any authority, or power, of any sort whatever, in this country, save only the parliament of Ireland. To assure his Majesty that we humbly conceive, that in this right, the very essence of our liberties consists, a right, which we on the part of all the people of Ireland, do claim as their birth-right, and which we cannot yield, BUT WITH OUR LIVES.

“To assure his Majesty, that we have seen with concern, certain claims advanced by the Parliament of Great Britain, in an act, entitled ‘An Act for the better securing the dependency of Ireland;’ an act containing matters entirely irreconcilable to the fundamental rights of this nation; that we conceive this act, and the claims it advances, to be the great and principal cause of the discontents and jealousies of this kingdom.

“To assure his Majesty, that his Majesty’s Commons of Ireland, do most sincerely wish, that all bills which become law in Ireland should receive the approbation of his Majesty, under the great seal of Britain, but that yet, we do consider the practice of suppressing our bills, in the councils, or altering the same anywhere, to be another just cause of discontent and jealousy.

“To assure his Majesty, that an act, entitled, ‘An Act, for the better accommodation of his Majesty’s forces,’ being unlimited in its duration, and defective in other instances, but passed in that shape from the particular circumstances of the times, is another just cause of discontent and jealousy, in this kingdom.

“That we have submitted these principal causes of discontent and jealousy in Ireland, and remain in humble expectation of redress.

“That we have the greatest reliance on his Majesty’s wisdom, the most sanguine expectations from his virtuous choice of a chief governor, and great confidence in the wise, auspicious, and constitutional councils which we see with satisfaction, his Majesty has adopted.

“That we have moreover, a high sense and veneration for the British character, and do therefore conceive that the proceedings in this country, founded as they are in right, and tempered by duty,

must have excited the approbation and esteem, instead of wounding the pride, of the British nation.

“And we beg leave to assure his Majesty, that we are the more confirmed in this hope, inasmuch as the people of this kingdom, have never expressed a desire, to share the freedom of England, without declaring a determination to share her fate likewise, standing and falling with the British nation.”

On the 14th of May, the house adjourned for three weeks, in order to give time to the British Parliament, to take into consideration the claim made by Ireland for self-legislation, and on the 17th of that month, the Earl of Shelburne, (afterwards Marquis of Lansdowne), in the Peers, and Mr. Fox in the Commons, brought forward the subject of the Irish addresses. Mr. Fox went fully into the nature of the claims in question. As to the 6 Geo. I. he said, “that it could not be supported with any show of justice. He had always been of opinion out of office, that it was downright tyranny to make laws for the *internal* government of a people, who were not represented among those by whom such laws were made. As to the power of *external* legislation, Ireland had reason to spurn at it, for it had been employed against Ireland as an instrument of oppression, to establish an impolitic monopoly in trade; to enrich one country at the expense of the other.” In another part of his speech he said, and the sentiment is worth recording, that “for his part he would rather see Ireland totally separated from the crown of England than kept in obedience only by force. Unwilling subjects were little better than enemies; it would be better have no subjects at all than to have such as would be continually on the watch to seize the opportunity of making themselves free. If this country (England), should attempt to coerce Ireland, and succeed in the attempt, the consequence would be that, at the breaking out of every war with any foreign power, the first step must be to send troops over to secure Ireland, instead of calling upon her to give a willing support to the common cause.” He then proceeded to consider the demand for an alteration of the law of Poynings, relative to the right claimed by the Privy Council of England to alter Irish bills. “To this too,” he said, “he was ready to assent. If a proper use had been made of the power it, perhaps, might have been retained, but to his knowledge it had been grossly abused. In one instance in particular, a bill had been sent over to England two years ago, granting, and very wisely, and very justly granting, indulgences to the Roman Catholics;—*in the same bill there was a clause in favor of Dissenters, for repealing the sacramental test; this clause was struck out, contrary,*

*in his opinion, to sound policy, as the alteration tended to make an improper discrimination between two descriptions, of men which did not tend to the union of the people.*" This shews how little the tenderness of English Cabinets towards the Protestant Dissenters in Ireland had increased since the reign of Queen Anne; and how much better they, as well as all other classes of Irishmen, were treated by a native parliament. Mr. Fox concluded his speech by moving—"that it is the opinion of this committee (a committee of the whole house) that the act of the 6 George, I., entitled, '*An Act for better securing the dependence of Ireland on the crown of Great Britain,*' ought to be repealed." On the 27th May, the Duke of Portland communicated the resolution to the Irish Parliament in a speech from the throne; and an address moved in the Commons by Mr. Grattan, expressive of entire satisfaction, was carried by a majority of 209; the Recorder Bradstreet, and Mr. Walsh, being the only dissentients from it; both of whom thought it injudicious to insert in the address, the words—"that there will no longer exist any constitutional question between the two nations that can disturb their mutual tranquility," which words formed part of it.

Still, however, there were some who thought that the rights of Ireland were not fully declared or secured by what had been done. When the Commons were in committee on the bill for the modification of Poynings' law on the 6th of June, Mr. Flood proposed, as an amendment to the bill, then before the house, that "whereas, doubts have arisen on the construction of the law, commonly called Poynings' law, and of the 3 & 4 Philip and Mary, explanatory thereof. Be it enacted by the King's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice of the lords spiritual and temporal and commons in the present parliament assembled; and by the authority of the same, that the said law of Poynings, and the said 3 & 4 Philip and Mary, be and stand repealed, save only as follows:—that is to say, be it enacted.

"That no parliament shall be holden in this kingdom until a license for that purpose be had and obtained from his Majesty, his heirs and successors, under the great seal of Great Britain."

"And that all bills, considerations, causes, ordinances, tenors, and provisions of either or both houses of parliament, shall be of right certified to his Majesty, his heirs and successors, unaltered under the great seal of Ireland, by the Lord Lieutenant, or the chief governor or governors, and council of this kingdom for the time being; and that such bills, and no others, being returned unaltered, under the seal of Great Britain shall be capable of



receiving the royal assent, or dissent in parliament, according to his Majesty's disposition, either for giving his assent or dissent, to the same respectively."

Mr. Yelverton moved, instead of the amendment proposed by Mr. Flood, another in these words (the object being to prevent delay in summoning parliaments, one of the evils which Mr. Flood complained of as likely to arise under the bill); "be it further enacted, that no bill shall be certified into Great Britain as a cause or consideration for holding a parliament in this kingdom (Ireland), but that parliaments may be holden in this kingdom, although no such bill shall have been certified previous to the meeting thereof." Mr. Yelverton's amendment was carried without a division.

On the 11th June, 1782, on the further debate on the bill for repealing the 6 George I., Mr. Flood endeavoured to get the house to insist on a positive renunciation by Great Britain, of all right to bind Ireland by British acts of parliament—and not to rest satisfied with the repeal of the declaratory law, which, as he very justly contended, did not, in any way, alter the right. He was, however, opposed by Mr. Grattan, on the ground that it suggested an ungenerous doubt of English justice, and Mr. Flood was defeated. However, on the 20th December following, Mr. Secretary Townshend, alarmed by a communication from the Lord Lieutenant, gave notice that he would bring in a bill for the object sought for, which he did on the 22nd January, 1783.

The principal clause of this bill as passed into law, (23 Geo. III. c. 28.) is as follows :

"Be it enacted, that the right claimed by the people of Ireland, to be bound only by laws enacted by his Majesty, and the parliament of that kingdom, in all cases whatever; and to have all actions, and suits at law, or in equity, which may be instituted in that kingdom, decided in his Majesty's courts therein, *finally and without appeal* from thence, shall be, and is hereby, declared to be established and ascertained *for ever, and shall at no time hereafter, be questioned or questionable.*"

From the period of the passing of this act, to the Union, Ireland was independent of all legislative and judicial control, on the part of Great Britain. Certain, and as I conceive, very mischievous forms still existed, with reference to the mode in which Irish bills were submitted for the approval of the Crown; but the consideration of these, belongs more properly, to another part of my argument. Here it is sufficient to have traced the progress of Irish independence, during its long struggle with British usurpation, to the position which it ultimately attained; and this, I have now done.

Our next business, is to ascertain, what the state of the country was, during the continuance of her independent parliament, down to the year 1801.

The details of her commercial affairs, during this period, I shall not go into, in this place, but will content myself with general evidence, of a character not to be doubted, of her amazing advance in every thing which could prove the existence of national prosperity. The sole reason for my not stating in this place, the precise amount of her trade and commerce, is, that we have no means of comparing it, item by item, with that which existed before the declaration of independence. We have the means of making this comparison, for a very great portion of the time which has elapsed, since the Union; and by placing the details of the period, from 1782, to the Union, side by side, with those of the period since, we can more accurately judge of the comparative prosperity of the two latter periods. The contrast between the eighteen years of independence, and the previous part of the century, can only be founded on general evidence, and to that I proceed. The wretchedness of Ireland, during the time last mentioned, must be fresh on the reader's mind.

The evidences of Ireland's prosperity, from 1782 to the Union, are both negative and positive. The former is to be found, in the absence of those perpetual complaints of poverty, on the part of the people, whether in petitions to the legislature, writings of individuals, or representations in parliament; which, year after year, are to be met with in the history of the country, under her dependent parliament. That some murmurs of distress were occasionally heard, there can be no doubt. Eighteen years of the best government, in a country too, which had previously been brought to the lowest state of misery; and which, in its peculiar social elements, contained so much to perpetuate that misery, could not change that country into an Utopia. Yet, the improvement must have been great, indeed, and the distress strangely lessened, when a historian,\* whose pages, containing the history of the former period, are crowded with details of poverty and want; and who has, moreover, written expressly to show, that Ireland was at all times so ill governed, that her only hope lay in the Union with England, gives but one† instance of a public declaration of like distress, in that part of his work, which treats of her history under her independent legislature. Had we nothing beyond this, to make us conclude that her condition was bettered by self-rule, it ought to go far towards convincing us.—

\* Plowden.

† After 1783.

Let us, however, look to positive testimony. Of this we have abundance, both from the friends of the Union, and its enemies. From the opinions of the former, I shall extract but one. I prefer resting my case, where possible, on the admissions of my opponents. In a speech delivered by him in the House of Commons, in 1798, Lord (then Mr.) Plunket said, speaking of Ireland, under her independent legislature, “Laws well arranged and administered, a constitution fully recognised and established, *her revenue, her trade, her manufacture, thriving beyond hope or example, of any other country of her extent : within these few years, advancing with a rapidity, astonishing even to herself ;* not complaining of deficiency, in any of those respects, but *enjoying and acknowledging her prosperity,* she is called on to surrender them all, to the control of whom ? to an island which has grown great, and prosperous, and happy, by the very same advantages which Ireland enjoys,—a free and independent constitution, and the protection of a domestic superintendent *parliament.*” This is surely high authority, but, perhaps, Lord Plunket enhanced the prosperity of his country, in the hope of preserving her freedom. Let us pass then to the evidence of others. Lord Clare, the man to whom the task of carrying the Act of Union, through the House of Lords, was confided, in a pamphlet published by him, in the same year, (1798) thus writes : “*There is not a nation on the habitable globe which has advanced in cultivation and commerce, in agriculture and manufactures, with the same rapidity, in the same period,*” viz., from 1782.

One authority more I will quote, and when it is considered who that authority is, I am sure it will not be thought necessary to cite another. He was the man, to whom was specially entrusted the defence of the Union measure,—Mr. Secretary Cooke. In the very pamphlet, written by him, for the express purpose of proving to the people of Ireland, the advantages of, and necessity for, that measure, he says ;\* in combating a supposed objection to the Union, on the ground, that it would be ruinous to Ireland, and that “all that was required for her, was a firm and steady administration :”—“here, we must ask, what is meant by a *firm and steady administration* ? Does it mean such an administration as tends to the increase of the nation, in population, its advancement in agriculture, in manufactures, in wealth, and prosperity ? If that is intended, *we have the experience of it these twenty years ;* FOR IT IS UNIVERSALLY ADMITTED, THAT NO COUNTRY IN THE WORLD EVER MADE SUCH RAPID ADVANCES, AS IRELAND HAS DONE IN THESE

\* ‘Arguments for, and against the Union, considered,’ p. 52. Dublin, 1799.



RESPECTS." To go beyond this admission for proof of what an Irish independent parliament had done for Irish prosperity, would surely be wasting, needlessly, the readers time.

It is further to be remarked, that the improvement in trade, manufacture, and tillage, which is thus admitted to have taken place in Ireland, during the period of her legislative independence, did not arise from any external circumstances. During great part of it, Great Britain was engaged in foreign wars, to which Ireland contributed large sums of money. We have seen, that in 1779, she was so beggared, as to be unable to pay the troops charged on her own establishment; and this, at a time, when she had to pay interest on a debt, not amounting to two millions. In 1800, so largely had she contributed to the war expenditure of the empire, that her debt then amounted to nearly twenty-two millions: yet, to such an extent had her commerce been increased, and her internal sources of wealth opened to her people, that neither was the pressure of taxation to meet her liabilities complained of, as insupportable, nor were any fears entertained of her ability to pay off the whole debt then due of her, in a few years of peace. Such, indeed, was the improvement in her finances, that her customs and excise revenue, in 1800, amounted to £2,100,000:—\*a sum greater than the entire of her debt in 1779, under the pressure of which, she had actually become bankrupt; and that revenue would, of course, have gone on increasing, with the increase of her population. That her debt in 1800 could be rapidly cleared off in time of peace, we can readily conceive, when we find, that nearly £14,000,000 of it were incurred during the six years of war, from 1793. Her expenses for 1799 having been £4,347,000. Her charges during the last year of the preceeding peace, had amounted to £1,012,000 only, and taking her revenue, at the sum above stated, viz., £2,100,000; there would remain £1,100,000 to meet the charge of the debt. The latter, however, amounted only to £1,000,000, so, that with the imposition of no new tax, and without supposing any increase of the then revenue of Ireland, there would annually remain in the treasury a sum of £100,000 to go towards reducing the debt.

Having said so much, as to the *prosperity* of the country under self-government, let us now consider her progress in other respects. In the very first session of the independent parliament, Ireland obtained the *Habeas Corpus Act*, the great safeguard of the subject's liberties. In the same session, the Perpetual Mutiny Bill was repealed; the sacramental test which excluded Dissenters from

\* According to the report of Lord Monteagle's committee, of 1820, on the State of the Irish Poor. App. f. 2.

offices of trust, under the crown, was abolished ; and the independence of the judges was secured, by the enactment, that their commissions should last during good behaviour, and not as previously, during the pleasure of the crown:—mighty boons to a nation. We have, already, seen the extent of relief granted to the Roman Catholics, in the first year of independence, by the passing of Mr. Gardiner's bills. It is worth our while to consider the progress of legislation in their behalf, shewing, as it does, the liberality which the bulk of the Protestants of Ireland, *when freemen themselves*, exhibited towards them; notwithstanding, that, at this period, to use the words of Mr. Plowden,\* “the castle gates were trebly barred against concession and indulgence.” “The most friendly and liberal declarations in their favor,” says this same author, “had been made by the different bodies of volunteers.” The patriots, however, who almost to a man, were favorable to the claims of the Catholics, declined bringing them before parliament; because, the circumstance of their being moved from the opposition bench, would be a sure ground of rejection. The Catholics could not but observe the indisposition of *government* to concession, daily increase; and the day of remonstrance and redress vanish behind the cloud of rigor and coercion, now “assumed necessary, to be exercised upon the Irish people.” “*The Irish nation*,” however, continues Mr. Plowden, “had been, for some time, in the habit of reading and canvassing all political topics; and, there is no doubt, but that the public mind was much opened, and the people out of parliament, generally disposed to support the Catholic claims.”† Of this feeling, too many instances cannot be adduced, and others will be found, as I proceed with the subject.

On the 25th January, 1792, Sir Hereules Langrishe, a supporter of government, brought in a very modified bill for the relief of the Roman Catholics, removing some of the obstacles still interposed to education amongst them, permitting intermarriages between them and Protestants, and throwing open to them the profession of the law. The Roman Catholics themselves were discontented at the extent of benefit proposed to be conferred on them; and there is good reason for believing, that the minister's object was, by offering an amount of privilege to them, which some of the more slavish of their body would thankfully receive, to get an opportunity of withholding the more extensive franchises, which would otherwise be wrung from him by the liberality of the nation. A large portion of the Protestant aristocracy it is true, was opposed to any ex-

tension of *political* rights to Roman Catholics, and several of the grand juries protested vehemently against their admission to the elective franchise, but this conduct was for the most part attributable to personal motives, and to fears for their own political assendancy. "A great majority of the leading signatures affixed to these resolutions," says Mr. Plowden, "were those of men, either high in the government of the country, or enjoying lucrative places under it, or possessing extensive borough interest." Nor did the manifestations of hostility which appeared, spontaneously shew themselves. "Agents," continues this writer, "had been employed to tamper with every grand jury, that met during the summer assizes."\* "But," he proceeds, "some of them *rejected indignantly the proposals made to them, of coming to any resolutions injurious to their Catholic brethren.*" The Protestant Dissenters, too, it must be observed, shewed every desire to assist the Roman Catholics in their efforts for freedom.

On the 8th of February, Mr. John O'Neil presented a petition from Belfast to the House of Commons, signed by upwards of six hundred persons, many of whom, he said, he knew personally, to be persons of great reputation. The prayer of the petition was, that the legislature *would repeal all penal and restricting laws against Roman Catholics, and put them on the same footing as their Protestant fellow subjects.* The treatment which this petition met from the government party, shews the anxiety that existed on their part to keep up an ascendancy in the state, for the preservation of their old "*divide et impera*" policy. On its being read, Sir Hercules Langrishe, who had just brought in his bill, for the qualified gifts to the Catholics, very strongly, and at large expressed his astonishment at the novelty and singularity of this union of Dissenters with Catholics. "He would not," he said, "*object to the reception of a petition from so respectable a member of the house, but he had seen some treasonable productions from gentlemen of that town.*"

This is not the only instance which could be adduced, of the irritation produced in the minds of government, and their supporters, by the spirit of friendship which had grown up among the different sects in Ireland. The Roman Catholic delegates appointed in 1792, framed a petition to the king, complaining of the restrictions under which they still laboured, and praying for admission to serve in the army and navy, the elective franchise, and some other privileges. In the month of December, when a deputation of five delegates proceeded to present it, they were received at Belfast,

\* Vol. 2, p. 375, 376.



in the most encouraging manner. "Some of the most respectable inhabitants," says Mr. Plowden, "waited upon them, at the Donegal arms, where they remained two hours,\* and upon their departure, the populace took the horses from their carriages, and dragged them through the town, amid the loudest shouts and wishes for their success.† On the 2nd January, 1793, they presented their address to the king in person at St. James's, and were graciously received by his Majesty. The speech from the throne, on opening the session of the Irish parliament in 1793, recommended the situation of the Roman Catholics to the consideration of the legislature. When the very stinted nature of the bill brought in for their relief in the previous year, is considered, and the indignation then manifested by the ministerial party, at the demands for a more extended measure, it is impossible to suppose, that this recommendation came voluntarily from ministers. It is much more likely to have been yielded through necessity, to the sense entertained by the entire Irish nation, of the injustice shewn to the Roman Catholics. That the recommendation was universally approved of by the whole people, there can at least be no doubt.

On the 4th February, Mr. Secretary Hobart brought the bill for the further relief of the Catholics, before the House of Commons. The famous Dr. Duigenan opposed it, in a furious and bitter philippic; but he and Mr. Ogle, were the only members who resisted the bringing of it in. On the 22nd of February, it was read a second time, and so far were old prejudices laid aside, that when it was in committee, Mr. George Knox, after a most able and liberal speech, moved "that the committee might be empowered to receive a clause to admit Roman Catholics to sit and vote in the House of Commons." The motion was strongly supported, but ultimately rejected by a majority of 163, against 69. The bill, as it passed in the course of the session into law, by the title of 33 Geo. III. c. 21, gave however, a great additional share of relief to the Catholics, and the first instalment of *political power*, by the important gift of the elective franchise, a gift which, considering their numerical proportion, could not but ere long, have placed them on a level with their Protestant fellow-citizens, if Ireland had retained her legislature. As it was, they obtained together with this boon, admission into the legal and medical professions, and to partial rank in the army and navy, the right to carry arms when possessed of property to a certain amount, to act as grand jurors and justices of the peace, and were relieved from certain penalties, for not at-

\* They went by Donaghadee and Port Patrick.

† Vol. 2, p. 388

tending Protestant service, to which they had remained liable, notwithstanding the former acts in their behalf. We should not forget, that in England, the Roman Catholics were excluded from the army and navy, and the bar, till years after, another proof, that it was to *Irish not English feeling*, that the concessions in this country were made.

In January 1795, Lord Fitzwilliam assumed the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland, with the full understanding, that the complete emancipation of the Roman Catholics, would be assented to by government, and the knowledge of this fact, made his arrival a subject of joy to the entire nation. The hopes excited by his appointment, were however, soon dashed by his departure, an event which caused an universal gloom among all classes of the people, and altogether destroyed the expectations of the Catholics.

To shew the despondence created by the recal of his Lordship, I may mention, that on the day he left Ireland, the 25th March, 1795, *all the shops of Dublin were shut; no business of any kind was transacted, and the whole city put on mourning.\** Addresses were presented to him from all parts of the country, and every thing, in fact shewed, that the indignation was not that of a sect or party, but was in the fullest sense national.

Notwithstanding the hopelessness of concession which was now entertained by the Catholics, Mr. Grattan brought in a bill for their total emancipation, (a petition for which had been presented a short time before, from all the freeholders of Tipperary). On the second reading of it on the 4th of May, it was vehemently opposed by the Solicitor General, on the part of government, who had determined on using every effort to defeat it, and after a very long and acrimonious debate, it was rejected by a majority of 155 against 84, *a large number of the more independent supporters of ministers, having voted against them, notwithstanding its being made a government question.*

On the 17th February, 1797, the Catholic claims were once more, for the last time, brought before the Irish Parliament, by Mr. Grattan, who, after a long and admirable speech, moved, "that the admissibility of persons professing the Roman Catholic religion, to seats in parliament, is consistent with the safety of the Crown, and the connexion of Great Britain with Ireland." On this occasion, however, many of those who were usually among the warmest supporters of the Catholics, and agreed fully in the principle of the resolution, opposed it, on the ground that it was

\* Plowd. Vol. 2, p. 511.

not a fit time for its consideration. It was accordingly lost by a majority of 143 against 19, and the state into which the events of the following year threw the country, prevented it from being ever again discussed.

It may be thought, that I have given more space to the history of legislation in favor of Roman Catholics, than in a limited essay like this is allowable. I, for my part, think it most desirable, that it should be placed before the Irish people more at length than has hitherto been done: I wish them to be fully aware of the fact, which I think they will learn from these pages, that the period of their country's history, during which she was most independent and most *Irish*, was also that, in which she was most free from intolerance and sectarian enmities. I wish the Irish Roman Catholics to feel, that it was not by the aid of British justice, but through the sympathies of their Protestant fellow subjects, that their fathers were enabled to construct that basis, on which *they* have *since* erected the temple of their civil freedom. I wish the Protestants of Ireland to remember, that when *their* fathers were freemen, they were tolerant and enlightened, and that they believed the liberties which they possessed could only be retained by sharing them with their fellow countrymen of all persuasions. To both I have presented only history. From it, I leave them to draw their own conclusions.

But it may be said, that whatever the state of Ireland may have been during the interval from 1782 to 1801, every page which I have written, bears evidence of the dishonesty and corruption of her parliament, during the entire interval. Admitting this to be true, it makes the argument in favor of Ireland's independence stronger. It shews how much that independence, with a *bad* parliament was able to effect, and leaves us to conclude that with a *good* parliament, it would effect infinitely more. What a nation wants, is, not an independent *parliament*, but an independent *people*. The latter can work out its own destinies, and effect its own objects, in defiance of any parliament, however corrupt or debased. But an independent people, must be a *nation*.—It cannot be a *province*. A section of a large empire—constituting numerically a minority of its population, as it must yield to the majority, on all occasions where a collision of interests takes place, can have no independence; but a whole people, whatever may be its extent, if it possesses the *forms* of independence, can never, for any length of time, be kept without its *substance*. Ireland, during the portion of her history, which we have been last considering, had the *form* of an independent government, but she had not a *wholly* independent people. The result, was, the destruction of



that constitution which she had so nobly battled for and won, and the consequent annihilation of her trade, manufactures, and prosperity of every sort.

I now come to the concluding portion of my historical review; that which relates to the condition of Ireland, since her union with Great Britain. Into the history of the measure itself, I do not mean to enter. It has, during the last two years, been so fully, so ably, and so frequently discussed, that there can be no man interested in the politics of Ireland, ignorant of it now. All men, however different may be their views, either of its motives, or results, agree in denouncing the means by which it was carried. The universal voice of Protestant Ireland was raised against it—all that was most bold and manly in Catholic Ireland joined earnestly in the protest, though unfortunately, specious promises and artfully excited hopes, acting on the minds of men, on whose limbs still hung their broken fetters, made too many of the Catholics dumb. All the plans which a bad ingenuity could devise, and a bad daring execute, were adopted to ensure its success, and it succeeded. Let us calmly look upon its consequences.

I shall, as before, commence with the financial and commercial state of the country and I will endeavour, as far as possible, to put the items, so as to bring them in juxta position with those, during the period of the parliamentary independence. Before going into this comparison, however, I think it desirable, indeed necessary, to disabuse the minds, of at least some of my readers, respecting a matter which is often fallaciously taken, as a test of prosperity—namely, the gross amount of a country's imports and exports, and the number and tonnage of ships, belonging to it at different periods. It will, doubtless, to many appear a strange assertion, that of two countries, the one having a large import and export trade, and shipping of considerable tonnage; the other having scarcely any imports or exports, and totally without ships, the latter may be the more prosperous. Yet this is, beyond question true. Let us suppose a tolerably populous state—having great mineral wealth—a fertile soil, and good climate, in fact possessing within its own limits the raw material of every thing, or of nearly every thing, required to supply the wants of its people—and that this raw material is actually *manufactured* to the last degree of finish by its own artizans. Now, if the agricultural population of such a State, bear such a proportion to its manufacturing population, that each produces just enough to supply the wants of the other, and no more; it is clear, that there will be nothing left for either to send away to other countries, and that neither will require to bring in

from other countries, anything for its consumption. It will have neither imports nor exports, and consequently cannot require, and will not possess shipping. Now, it is quite plain, that the people of such a state may be fully employed, and may be possessed of all the necessaries and comforts of life—may in fact be in the highest state of prosperity. On the other hand, let us suppose the very same state, from misgovernment, non-residence of those to whom its rents are paid, industrial ignorance on the part of its people, or any other causes, to be without manufactures of any sort, its mines unexplored and its whole population forced to look to agricultural pursuits for the means of subsistence. In this case it must, of course, import every manufactured article it requires, from other countries, and the produce of its soil, being the only wealth it has, it must export that produce to pay for the articles it imports. Its imports and exports will therefore, both be very large and the tonnage of shipping belonging to it in all likelihood great. If its trade, too, be carried on, by means of regular packets plying between it and any neighbouring country with which it exchanges agricultural produce for manufactures, the tonnage of such packets will be very great indeed, in proportion to the value of their cargoes; as the exports will consist of produce, such as live cattle, corn, &c. which is of small value, compared to its weight and bulk. Yet with this great export and import trade, and this large quantity of shipping, the country would be in a condition little short of ruin, the value of its products, in other words, the amount of its wealth, being just one-half of what it would be in the other case, in which we have supposed it to have neither imports, exports, nor shipping. One word more, to make this quite clear. We will suppose the country to raise annually in the first instance £20,000,000 worth of agricultural produce, and the value of its manufactures to be £20,000,000 more. Thus, there will be £40,000,000 worth of produce *created* annually within it, which its inhabitants exchange with each other, supplying their mutual wants, without any external trade. Now, if it had no manufactures, and only its agriculture to depend on, (which I have here supposed to be fully developed,) its whole annual produce would amount to only £20,000,000, of which £10,000,000 worth would be consumed by those who raised it, and the rest exported to exchange for those manufactures which they required. Its imports and exports would, in this case, each amount to £10,000,000 annually, and we can easily imagine the quantity of shipping that would be necessary for so large a trade; while we have seen, that notwithstanding that trade, the country would, as I before stated, produce only one-half

the value that it did without it, viz.: £20,000,000 worth, instead of £40,000,000.

This explanation, which I trust is sufficiently clear, will shew the fallacy of any deductions as to a country's prosperity, from the mere state of its imports, exports, and shipping. Without knowing the nature of the articles imported and exported, general returns of their amount and value are absolutely worthless. I shall therefore pay no attention to such returns, in the present investigation, except where, by ascertaining their precise nature, I can fairly make them the subject of argument.\*

The article of linen, is one, of which we have the returns of the export at different periods; being taken on the average of seven years. These returns (as cited in Mr. John O'Connell's Argument for Ireland, p. 219,) give us the following results:—

1780	..	..	..	19,556,379	yards.
1798	..	..	..	41,670,972	"
Increase in 18 years	..	..	..	22,114,593	"
1825	..	..	..	47,588,707	"
Increase in 27 years	..	..	..	5,917,735	"

Official records not being in existence, of the trade between the two countries, since 1825, we cannot arrive at the linen exports after that date, with any accuracy. Mr. Staunton, however, in page 33 of his reply to Mr. Martin, gives us fair ground for concluding that they did not exceed the average given under that date. His reasoning is this: "There is an authentic account of the *British* transactions, in the exportation of linen, between 1825, and 1835, deducible from the annual finance accounts. The value of this commodity, exported in the two years, was as follows:—

1825	..	..	..	Official value	£3,280,000
				Real value	2,440,000
1835	..	..	..	Official value	3,760,000
				Real value	2,360,000

This shews a decline in real value, but an increase of 14½ per cent. in official value. This increase, was, however, likely to be a Scotch increase. I need not state that there is a large importation of Scotch, as well as Irish linens, from British ports. There is no recent account of the transactions in Scotch linens, but we have

\* I do not pretend to any originality in these views. They have been put forward frequently by others, but I think with less clearness than may suit persons not accustomed to consider such matters. Mr. Staunton however, has, in his reply to Montgomery Martin, p. 26, given a very simple and satisfactory proof of the tonnage fallacy.



one in Mr. M'Culloch's Commercial Dictionary, from 1813, to 1822. The yards exported in these two years, were as follows:—

1813	..	..	..	19,000,000 yards.
1822	..	..	..	36,000,000 „

Here we have an increase of nearly 90 per cent., and that the effect was operative on the amount of British exports, between 1825 and 1835, is inferrable, from the great increase of the Scotch revenue, and trade in general, in that interval. Hence, it is fair to conclude, that of the comparatively small augmentation of British transactions in linen, between 1825, and 1835, no part was connected with Ireland, and if that were the case, it may be taken for granted, that there was no augmentation whatever in the Irish linen manufacture, between these years. In confirmation, too, of this opinion, we have the fact stated by Mr. Staunton, that the value of linens exported, during the ten years in question, to foreign countries, declined from £180,000, to £86,000.

The table above given, shews, it is true, an increase in the export of Irish linens since the Union, but how small it is in proportion to that which took place during the eighteen years of domestic legislation. During those eighteen years, the linen export of Ireland nearly doubled; during twenty-seven years which followed the Union, its increase did not amount to one-seventh of its whole value. Yet, during nine years of this latter period, the linen exports of Scotland had increased, as we have seen, nearly ninety per cent. Is it not reasonable to suppose, that the Irish trade would have advanced in a like degree, if fostered by a native parliament?

“But,” says Mr. John O'Connell, “it may be argued, that the small proportion which the *post-Union* increase of linen export, bears to that between 1780 and 1798, is mainly owing to the fact, that there was not room for much further improvement; the linen, like every other trade, having its limits. This, however, is, in fact, only another testimony to the beneficial influence of Irish home legislation, since, under its short-lived auspices, the utmost limit was so nearly attained. And it remains for the advocates of the Union, to shew that had that measure never been carried, the six millions increase up to 1825, would not have occurred, by the mere force of the increase of demand in England, caused by the increase of population in that country, to say nothing of the continuance of that beneficial influence which, on such good ground of indisputable figures, we ascribe to home legislation.”

The linen manufacture, however, is that which shews most

favorably for the sustainers of the Union. The ruin of all the other manufactures of the country, since that event, will be shewn in a subsequent place; meanwhile, let us confine ourselves to the question of imports and exports.

In a speech delivered by the late Rev. Doctor Boyton, on the 23rd February, 1833, and cited by Mr. O'Connell in the Corporation Discussion of the Repeal Question, the following statement was made with respect to this subject:—

“The exports and imports, so far as they are a test of a decay of profitable occupation, so far as the exports and imports are supplied from the parliamentary returns, exhibit extraordinary evidence of the condition of the labouring classes. The importation of flax-seed, an evidence of the extent of a most important source of employment, was in 1790, 339,745 barrels; 1800, 327,621 barrels; 1830, 168,451 barrels. The importation of silk, raw and thrown, was in 1790, 92,091lbs.; 1800, 79,060lbs.; 1830, 3,190lbs.; of wrought iron in 1790, 2,971 tons; in 1800, 10,241 tons; in 1830, 871 tons. Formerly we spun all our own woollen and worsted yarn. We imported in 1790, only 2,294lbs.; in 1800, 1,180lbs.; in 1826, 662,750lbs.—an enormous increase. There were, I understand, upwards of thirty persons engaged in the woollen trade in Dublin, who have become bankrupts since 1821.”

Here is a list of articles, which being raw materials of manufacture, are, to a great extent, tests of a country's prosperity; shewing a decline—nay, a total decay of the various manufactures, in which they are employed.\* We shall, further on, find returns confirming the notion given by it, of manufacturing ruin.

Having considered the exports of manufactured goods, and the imports of raw materials, I come to another class of imports, strongly marking the condition of a people, viz. of those articles which shew a general diffusion of comfort, and which can be had only from abroad. These are chiefly tea, sugar, tobacco, coffee, and wine.

In the report on the state of the Irish poor in 1830, by a committee, of which Lord Monteagle (then Mr. Spring Rice,) was chairman (Appendices, G. I., G. II. pp. 112 to 125. No. 667 of reports, 1830,) there are tables which it would occupy too much space to insert here, but from which the following facts have been deduced, relative to the consumption of the articles just enumerated:—

\* Dr. Boyton mentions the cotton manufacture as *one*, in which a large increase had taken place to 1826. Assuming, that his statement was correct, we shall find by the evidence of manufacturers and commissioners, that it *now* shares the general ruin. For regularity I pass it over here.

*“ Period from 1785, to the Union.*

TEA—Increase of consumption in Ireland ..	84 per cent.
Do.                      Do.            in England ..	45 ....

*From 1786, to the Union.*

TOBACCO—Increase in Ireland .....	100 per cent.
Do.    in England .....	64 ....

*From 1787, to the Union.*

WINE—Increase in Ireland .....	74 per cent.
Do.    in England .....	22 ....

*From 1785, to the Union.*

SUGAR—Increase in Ireland .....	57 per cent.
Do.    in England .....	53 ....

*From 1784, to the Union.*

COFFEE—Increase in Ireland .....	600 per cent.
Do.    in England .....	75 ....

*Period from the Union, to the year 1827.*

TEA—Increase in England .....	25 per cent.
Do.    in Ireland .....	24 ....
COFFEE—Increase in England .....	1800 per cent.
Do.    in Ireland .....	40 ....
SUGAR—Increase in England .....	26 per cent.
Do.    in Ireland .....	16 ....
TOBACCO—Increase in England .....	27 per cent.
Decrease in Ireland .....	37 ....
WINE—Increase in England .....	24 per cent.
Decrease in Ireland .....	45 ....

Thus, the average increase of consumption in Ireland, in the period before the Union, of all these articles, was 183 per cent. in England only 52 per cent., shewing the increase in comfort in Ireland, during that time, to be three and one-half times as great as it was in England.

Since the Union, the average increase on all has been, in England 380 per cent. ; in Ireland, only 72 per cent. : in other words,



the increase of comfort in the former country has, during that interval, been more than five times as great, as in the latter.

Mr. Staunton has, in his reply to Mr. Martin, already referred to, given another table (p. 7,) framed, as to Ireland, from Spring Rice's Reports, compared with the increase of population; and as to England, adopting Mr. Martin's own figures, which, for the further clearing up of the subject, I annex.

AVERAGE CONSUMPTION PER HEAD OF SEVERAL ARTICLES IN GREAT BRITAIN.

Year.	Sugar.	Wine.	Tobacco.	Tea.
	lbs. oz.	pts. oz.	oz. drs.	oz.
1801	28 4	4 6	16 12	24
1831	21 2	3 4	14 8	26

CORRESPONDING TABLE FOR IRELAND.

Year.	Sugar	Wine.	Tobacco.	Tea.
	lbs. oz.	pts. oz.	oz. drs.	oz.
1800	9 0	1 3	18 0	10
1827	4 8	1 2	7 0	7

This table shews more plainly than the general calculation before given, the effects of the Union, in diminishing the comforts of the lower and middling classes. We find the greatest falling off is in the article of tobacco, which is, perhaps, the chief luxury of the poor. Sugar and tea have declined next in proportion; while wine, the consumption of which is almost confined to the upper ranks of society, has diminished very slightly—less, in fact, than in England.

It may seem strange to the reader, that there should be a *decrease* in the *consumption* per head of the commodities here considered, while there is an increase of *importation*. This, however, results from the fact, that the increase of population has gone on in a greater *ratio* than the increase of importation, which, of course, leaves the quantity imported less *per head* on the population, than before, though absolutely greater in amount. The test of comfort, however, is, of course, not the absolute quantity, but the quantity consumed by each individual; and judging by this test, all the tables shew an *increase* of comfort under the independent parliament in Ireland, far beyond that of England, in the same time,

and a *decrease* of comfort in Ireland since the Union, as compared with England, proportionably greater.\*

The export of cattle, sheep, and pigs, has, it is true, greatly increased since the Union; but this, so far from shewing the prosperity of the country, goes to prove exactly the reverse. Indeed, I am disposed to think, paradoxical as the position will appear to some, that an export of food to any great extent, from a long-peopled country, which is *not* a large exporter of manufactures, is, in itself, *prima facie* evidence of the poverty of that country; that is, of the bulk of its inhabitants. In a newly colonized country, in which the inhabitants are few, and land to be had for nothing, an export of provisions may be a very profitable trade, as cattle and other live produce, cost the exporters nearly nothing in the rearing, being turned out into natural pastures to fatten; and corn, or other provisions of similar kind, are produced at a cost equivalent only to the labour bestowed on their cultivation, rent having no existence in such states of society. Provisions are, therefore, raised in such countries, at the lowest possible cost to the growers, and when sold in those in which rent and high-priced labour give them artificial value, bring a very large profit to the sellers, while they, on the other hand, are able to procure, in the old countries to which they trade, all the manufactures which they want at a far cheaper rate, than they could themselves make them. In an old country, however, which is fully brought into cultivation, rent and the other charges, added to the cost of the labour employed in raising provisions, make it necessary for the persons engaged in raising them, to be content with excessively small profits; and if those profits be further diminished, by the freight and charges, of export, the intermediate profits of the export merchant, &c., the sum received by the farmer, is as little over the expense of production, as can be conceived.

But, it will be said, by the political economist, that this notion of *infinitesimally* small profits to the farmers, is a fallacy; that

\* This explanation is the more necessary, as I find, in looking into the report of Alderman Butt's speech, in the Corporation debate, the learned Alderman made use of the very fallacy I here seek to guard against. The report goes thus:—"The hon. and learned gentleman (Mr. O'Connell) had referred to returns, shewing the increase in the consumption of articles of luxury and comfort in England and Ireland, from the Union to 1827. That return was not so unfavorable as he, Mr. Butt, had feared. It shewed a considerable increase in Ireland, although not so great as in England—but still an increase, (hear, hear.)" Whatever the learned Alderman *meant* to convey by this, I suspect much from the "hear, hear," that his friends understood his words to prove, that the increased import, shewed an increase of comfort too. It does so in just the same way as if a man, with a wife and one child, had £100 a year for their support; and that when his family increased to ten or a dozen children, he had an addition of £5 a year to his income, he would be thereby proved to be better off.

upon the principles of the science, his profits will be fully on a par with those of the persons engaged in all other employments, artizans, traders, &c. ; for that, all profits must tend to a common level. Now, this, as a general proposition, is undoubtedly true: but, suppose, that there are no artizans in the country, and the population, from want of other employment, is forced to have recourse to agriculture, at any profit, however trifling, which they can gain by it: of what value is the proposition then? In such a case it is clear, the people must be content with anything they can get, or starve. What I want to shew, and what I believe to be true, is, that this is, in fact, the condition of nearly all largely peopled countries exporting provision. Before giving my reason for this opinion, I must first observe that, the cost of all manufactured articles, consists almost wholly of the price of labour; the cost of produce raised from the soil consists partly of labour, and partly of rent.\* Now labour is especially the poor man's property; and, in fact, the only property he has. His gains must, therefore, be in proportion to the amount of labour required, for the production of the commodities which his country furnishes; and must, consequently, be greater in a manufacturing, than in an agricultural, country.

When agriculture and manufactures co-exist to any extent in a country, they, of course, so act on their mutual profits, as to reduce them, as already stated, to a common level, by those in the one occupation abandoning it for the other, till the competition in the labour market, by reducing the profits of the artizan to those of the farmer, gives no further temptation to the latter, to desert his pursuit for the other.

Now, this equalizing point, if I may so term it, can only be reached, either when there is no export of manufactures, or of agricultural produce, or when there is an equal export of both. If we consider the operation of the one pursuit on the other, we shall see this. Let us suppose the capitalist investing money in manufactures, to be unable to produce them so cheaply, as to command foreign markets, (the freight and charges on exportation absorbing too much of his profit, to leave him any remunerative balance) and to be forced to confine himself to the home market for his goods. Now, the limitation of his market, in two ways, affects the manufacturer injuriously; it lessens his spirit of enterprize, and by checking his manufacturing operations, prevents minute

\* I do not, of course, mean to say, that there are no other items, such as taxes, &c., that enter into the cost of both classes of products; but they are very small, comparatively speaking. Rent, too, (in its *common*, not *technical*, sense) goes into the cost of manufactures, as well as of crops; but, in the former, it is a mere fractional element of the cost: in the latter, sometimes nearly half of it.



subdivision of labour, and its consequent facility of production, thereby tending to increase the *cost* of that production to him. The demand for manufacturing labour, too, of course, diminishes with the demand for manufactures ; and those who would have found employment in it, are thrown on the chance of occupation, which agricultural pursuits may open to them. Now, the agriculturist, (whom I have supposed all through, to have been able to raise produce cheaply enough for profitable export) is by the increased competition for employment in his branch of industry, able to procure labour at lower rates, whereby his profits are, of course, larger ; the manufacturing capitalist finding that land gives better returns than manufactures, turns his attention to the former ; the ships employed in the raw produce export, will gladly bring, in return, cargoes at low freights, as, otherwise, they must arrive in ballast ; this encourages the import of foreign manufactures, till, finally, the whole manufacturing interest is ruined, and the people left no other employment, but that afforded by agriculture. Rents are consequently raised, as land must be taken at almost any terms ; the price of labour sinks, from the vast competition for work, to the lowest scale, that will support life, and the food of the country goes to sustain the people of more prosperous states.

Now, if the opposite state of things happened to exist, then, of course, the reverse of the operation just described, must have been the result. Agriculture would have declined, and the chief industry of the country would have been absorbed in manufactures. In neither of these instances, therefore, would that equalizing point have been reached, which has been referred to.

If, however, both manufacturers and agriculturists were able to export their respective produce, at fairly remunerative rates, or if both classes were shut out from foreign markets, (in consequence of their inability to compete in them with other producers) and were both thereby confined to the home market, their mutual influence on each other would keep the price of labour, in each occupation, at a common level.

For all these reasons, I think the reader will agree with me in concluding, that (where it possesses no peculiar monopoly of supply) a country exporting agricultural produce largely, without any corresponding export of manufactured articles, must, if it be fully peopled, be a poor country ; because this exclusive export of food, shews that manufactures have no existence in it—or that if they have existence, they must, as has been already proved, be rapidly tending to extinction. The country must therefore be in, or be quickly advancing towards, a purely agricultural condition.

But it has been already shewn that labour, (by which alone the poor man gains anything,) is not the sole constituent of value in anything produced from the soil in old countries, rent making up perhaps one third of its cost, whereas, it is nearly the sole element of value in manufactures: the tendency to agriculture, is consequently a tendency towards that pursuit which gives least benefit to the poor, and is *nearly* always indicative of a nation's poverty.\*

Of the correctness of this general abstract principle, the reader can judge for himself; perhaps I should not have given so much space to it, as I have done, as without it, it is abundantly easy to shew, that the Irish provision export, is profitless in the extreme to the *people*. It consists mainly of live stock raised with the least possible expenditure of labour. The system of green crops has, as yet, made very little way in Ireland, and the cattle, &c. exported, are chiefly fed on natural pastures, so that the wages of the herdsman who looks after them, and the price of whatever labour is expended in mowing and stacking the hay, which forms a portion of their food, are all the profit which the poor derive from the rearing of them. The rest, directly or indirectly, finds its way into the pockets of a landlord who lives abroad, and expends it on the manufactures of other countries. It is a mockery of common sense, to talk of such an export, as a sign of prosperity.

I have, in the tables given a few pages back, exhibited the decline in the import of those articles which may be taken as proofs of a country's prosperity; but what an increase there is in that of articles, which shew the opposite condition! I have before me, an official account of the trade between Great Britain and Ireland, for the year ending—the 21st. of February 1799—in which I find that the manufactured articles imported into the latter country, amounted altogether to

Official value.....£1,095,615.

Real value.....£1,640,195.†

What their present amount is, cannot be ascertained with accuracy, as no accounts of an official nature are kept of them. The Railway

\* I say *nearly* always, because when natural or political circumstances give one country the monopoly of supply, at its own terms, of some other country, such a trade may be profitable.

† In this account of *manufactures* imported, is one *singular* item, viz. :—“Cattle—Horses, £12,365”—Cotton Yarn forms another item of £36,000—but this was an article in its first stage of manufacture, and was, of course, to give further employment to *home labour*. I may add, that the Irish exports to England, the same year, are stated at £5,612,689, (though Mr. Butt spoke of them as three millions and a-half, perhaps looking only at the official value, which was then low,) of this great export, the sum-total for live stock, viz. :—“Cows, Oxen, Horses and Swine,” is only £168,242!

Report, however, estimates the consumption of woollen goods in Ireland to amount alone, to £1,400,000, of which not more than about £100,000, worth are manufactured at home, the rest being brought in from England; this one item of import, it seems, has thus risen to within £300,000, of the total value of the manufactures imported in 1799.—In addition to it, however, hats, earthen-ware, refined sugars, hardware, plated goods, and an hundred other articles, have ceased altogether to be manufactured in Ireland—and are imported to a vast extent; affording additional proof of the decay which, since the Union, has fallen on every branch of our national industry. I think I have now fairly dealt with the import and export question, so far as it is any test of prosperity. Let us see how far its results are corroborated by evidence, drawn from other sources.

There is first, the report of the “Hand-loom Weavers’ Enquiry Commissioners.” Of the great staple manufacture of Ireland, her linen, this report gives anything but a gratifying picture; Mr. Commissioner Muggeridge after investigating it as carefully as he could, found such contradictory statements made by different parties respecting it, (though the general tenor of their evidence, as cited by him, is certainly indicative of decay,) that he declared his inability, “in common with all those who have attempted the enquiry before him,” to say whether it is flourishing or not. With reference to this Mr. John O’Connell fairly says, in his Argument for Ireland, “the very controversy which exists, as to the state of that trade, is an unfavourable sign. When a branch of industry is really flourishing in any country, do we usually find, even among those at a distance from the scene of action, doubts and disputes existing on the subject? Yet they are to be found rife among persons intimately conversant with the linen trade in the north, as will be seen by the following extracts.” He then gives the opinions of a number of persons, taken from the report, of which, as I have already said, the greater number are to the effect, that it is not prosperous.

Of the cotton trade, I said, in quoting from Dr. Boyton’s speech, that I would mention facts, showing that the symptoms of prosperity in it, spoken of by him, have, since the date of his speech, wholly subsided. It is thus alluded to in the Railway Report: “the only town in Ireland in which the cotton manufacture is established, to any extent, is Belfast, and it is declining even there.” This statement is confirmed by Mr. Muggeridge, of the Hand-loom Enquiry, one of whose principal witnesses, Mr. Moncreef, of Belfast, stated, that “if all the capital of all the manufacturers in



Belfast, was combined, it would not equal that employed by one large establishment in England." The decline of this branch of trade, will be found to be corroborated likewise, by the subjoined list of the number of persons employed in various branches of manufactures in Ireland, in the year 1800, and at subsequent dates. Before giving it, however, I may as well state the conclusive evidence of the ruin of the silk trade, given by Mr. Otway, in the Hand-loom Enquiry Report. This gentleman says, "the silk trade is now confined to one fabric—the tabinets. There can be no doubt, the trade in weaving whole silk, is extinct, and that the manufactures of velvets, handkerchiefs, and ribbons, are confined to a few looms." More I need not add, on the subject of manufacturing decay, except to insert the table just alluded to. It appears in a statement, made in the year 1841, by the tradesmen of Dublin.

#### " WOOLLEN TRADE IN DUBLIN.

Master Manufacturers in 1800,	..	..	..	..	91
Do. in 1840,	..	..	..	..	12
Number of hands employed in 1800, ..	..	..	..	..	4938
Do. in 1840,	..	..	..	..	682

#### WOOL COMBING.

Master wool combers in 1800,	..	..	..	..	30
Do. in 1834,	..	..	..	..	5
Number of hands employed in 1800, ..	..	..	..	..	230
Do. in 1834,	..	..	..	..	66

#### CARPET MANUFACTURE IN DUBLIN.

Master Manufacturers in 1800	..	..	..	..	13
Do. in 1841,	..	..	..	..	1
Number of hands employed in 1800,	..	..	..	..	720
Do. in 1841, only those employed by Mr. Sheridan.					

#### BLANKETS.

Blanket Manufacturers in Kilkenny, in the year 1800,	..	..	..	..	56
Do. in 1822,	..	..	..	..	12
Operatives employed in 1800,	..	..	..	..	3000
Do. in 1841,	..	..	..	..	925

RATTEENS AND FRIEZES.

Number of persons supported by the Woollen Manufac- ture at Roscrea, in the year 1800, .. .. .	900
In the year 1841, not one comber permanently employed.	
Persons deriving employment and maintenance from the cotton manufactures at Belfast, and within ten miles round it, in the year 1800, .. .. .	27,000
Do. in 1839, .. .. . from 12,000 to 15,000 whose wages were miserably reduced, almost to the standard of a day labourer.	
Number of calico looms at full work at Balbriggan in 1799,	2000
Do. in 1841, .. .. .	226

SILK MANUFACTURE IN DUBLIN.

Number of broad looms in 1800, .. .. .	2500
Do. in 1840 .. .. .	250

HOSIERY.

In Dublin the number of hosiery frames was, in 1800, ..	329
Do. in 1840, .. .. .	80
In Cork the number of hosiery frames was, in 1800, ..	200
Do. in 1840, say .. .. .	12
The hosiery trade has become almost extinct at Belfast, Lisburn, Clonmel, Limerick, Waterford, Carrick, Kil- kenny, Carlow, Portarlinton, Maryborough, Newry, Dundalk, Armagh, and Drogheda.	

STUFF SERGE IN DUBLIN.

Master Manufacturers in 1800, .. .. .	25
Do. in 1841, .. .. .	1
Number of hands employed in 1800, .. .. .	1491
Do. in 1834, .. .. .	131

FLANNEL MANUFACTURE.

Looms at work in the County Wicklow in the year 1800,..	1000
Do. in 1841, .. .. .	0!

N. B.—The County Wicklow was the principal seat of this trade."

The number of bushels of malt, which have annually paid duty at various periods, is another test of the comforts of the people. What the amount was, previously to the year 1810, I am not aware, but since that period there has been a large decline in Ireland. The number of bushels I take from a parliamentary paper (Sess. No. 439,) given in full by Mr. Staunton, in his reply to Mr. Montgomery Martin's pamphlet, I find them to be

1810,	..	..	3,033,302 bushels.
1840,	..	..	1,604,307 do.

As however the decline in the latter year, may be attributable to the temperance system, which about that time had become extensively spread through the country; I will take the return for 1839 instead of it, and I find that to be 2,101,744 bushels—shewing a decrease of 900,000 bushels—after a space of thirty years, during which, be it remembered, the population of the country nearly doubled. But if this fact, of itself speaks strongly, how much more important does it seem, when we look at the English and Scotch consumption for the same years, likewise contained in the return. These are as follows:—

England, 1810,	..	..	23,541,291
Ditto, 1839,	..	..	33,687,302
Scotland, 1810,	..	..	784,527
Ditto, 1839,	..	..	4,567,083

Unfortunately, however, I have not yet gone through all the evidences of Irish misery; the most appalling part of the picture is yet to be exhibited.

The Railway Commissioners in whose report an attempt has been made to shew, as far as possible, the existence of a post-union prosperity in Ireland, founded on the usual fallacious general returns of imports, exports, &c., (but without official documents to guide them, the consequence of which, was an amount of error which Mr. Staunton has very clearly exposed) speak thus, in a note, of what came under their own observation, and can, therefore, be relied on: “we regret that the state of the labouring population does not warrant us in assuming that any considerable portion of this increased consumption is shared by them. The demand seems to proceed, almost exclusively from the superior class of landholders, and the inhabitants of towns.”

As to the general condition of the peasantry they state “among the effects of the rapid increase of population, without a corres-



ponding increase of remunerative employment, the most alarming, though the most obviously to be expected result, is a deterioration of the food of the peasantry. *Milk is become almost a luxury to many of them, and the quality of their potato-diet is generally much inferior to what it was at the commencement of the present century.* A species of potatoes, called the lumpers, has been brought into general cultivation, on account of its great productiveness and the facility with which it can be raised from an inferior soil, and with a comparatively small portion of manure. *This root, at its first introduction, was scarcely considered food good enough for swine; it neither possesses the farinaceous qualities of the better varieties of the plant, nor is it as palatable as any other, being wet and tasteless, and in point of substantial nutriment little better, as an article of human food, than a Swedish turnip.* IN MANY COUNTIES OF LEINSTER AND THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCES OF MUNSTER AND CONNAUGHT THE LUMPER NOW CONSTITUTES THE PRINCIPAL FOOD OF THE LABOURING PEASANTRY; *a fact which is the more striking when we consider the great increase of produce, together with its manifest improvement in quality which is annually raised in Ireland for exportation and for consumption by the superior classes.* Yet, even this is not the worst: of this horrible diet—this “food not good enough for swine,”—the miserable peasantry have no constant or sure supply. THE POOR-LAW COMMISSIONERS IN THEIR REPORT STATE THE FEARFUL AND ASTOUNDING FACT, THAT THERE ARE, IN IRELAND, 2,385,000 PEOPLE ABSOLUTELY DESTITUTE! This, at least, is damning proof of what Ireland has become since the Union. It leaves but one question to be asked,—*can any thing make her condition worse?*

There is one important matter which, though it refers to the era of Ireland's independence, I have designedly postponed mentioning until now, in order to contrast it with the state of things just described. I stated that *once* after 1783 the distress of the people was brought under the notice of parliament. This was in the month of January, 1788 (only six years after the declaration of independence, and of course, before the beneficial effects of that independence on the comforts of the people could be much felt). In that month, Mr. Connolly moved for a repeal of the hearth-money tax on all houses under the rent of thirty shillings a year as a relief to the poorer classes. He stated that with their then earnings, they could not afford to pay it, as an account of their necessary expenses would prove. He then submitted to the house the following statement of one man's necessary expenses for a year:—\*

\* Plowden, vol. 2. p. 195.

Per day.	In the Year.	Price.	Sum.
7lb. Potatoes.	7 brls., 12 stone.	5s. per brl.	£1 18 0
1 oz. butter.	22lbs. 13 oz.	6d per lb.	14 4½
1-12st. oatmeal.	3 cwt. 3 st. 1 Pottle.	11s. per cwt.	2 1 8½
3 Pints buttermilk.	136 gals. 9 pints,	1d. for 3 qrts.,	15 4½
Salt,	.. .. .	.. .. .	1 0
1 Kish of turf per week for 40 weeks, omitting } summer, at 18d. per kish,	.. .. .	.. .. .	3 0 0
House rent,	.. .. .	.. .. .	1 2 9
Clothing,	.. .. .	.. .. .	16 0
			£10 6 2½

This, we may fairly suppose, was considered the *lowest scale* of living of a poor man when put forward on an appeal to the compassion of parliament. If so, how many millions of Irishmen in 1844, would pray to be restored to the poverty of 1788?

The evils, of which I have already spoken, affect nearly the whole body of Irishmen. The ruin of trade and manufactures is fatal to the artizans and middle classes; the rural population cannot be more wretched than they are; there remains one fact to show that a total discouragement of Irish talent is met with by Irishmen, even on their own soil. I give it on the authority of an opponent, the *Dublin Evening Mail* which inserted the statement in reply to an article that appeared in the *Times* Newspaper.

“The Archbishop of Dublin is an Englishman—the Chief Administrator of the Irish Poor-law is an Englishman—the Paymaster of Irish Civil Service is a Scotchman—the Chief Commissioner of Irish Public Works is an Englishman—the Teller of the Exchequer is an Englishman—the Chief Officer of the Irish Constabulary is a Scotchman—the Chief Officer of the Irish Post Office is an Englishman; the Collector of Excise is a Scotchman; the Head of the Revenue Police is an Englishman; the second in Command is a Scotchman; the persons employed in the collection of the Customs, &c., are English and Scotch in the proportion of thirty-five to *one*. But the *Times* may, perhaps, observe ‘true; but all this is in elucidation of our plan for unbarring the gates of preferment, unsparingly, impartially and honestly. Scotchmen and Englishmen are placed in office in Ireland, and Irishmen in return, in Scotland and England, in order to draw closer the bonds of union between the three united nations.’ Again let us see how facts actually stand:—there are Cabinet Ministers, Englishmen, 10; Scotchmen, 3; Irishmen, 0; Lords of the Treasury, Englishmen, 4; Scotchman, 1; Irishman, 1; Clerks of the Treasury, English or Scotchmen, 112.

Mr. Fitzgerald (query an Irishman) 1; Members of the Lord Steward's and Lord Chamberlain's departments of the Royal Household, Englishmen and Scotchmen, 225; Irishmen, 4; British Ministers to foreign courts, Englishmen and Scotchmen, 131;—Irishmen, 4; Poor-law Commissioners, Englishmen, 3; Irishmen, 0. "We presume," adds the Editor, "that these facts shew that the natives of the three kingdoms are all placed upon an equal footing: the chances of access to preferments to an Englishman or Scotchman in Ireland being, in the few instances which have occurred to us, while writing, as 6 to 1; while the probability of an Irishman obtaining place in England, appears from an analogous calculation, to be in the proportion of 491 to 10, or as 1 to 50." "We could easily swell," he adds, "this list were it necessary. *Ireland has always been used, by English ministers, as a means of providing for poor relations, dependents and partizans: our highest as well as our lowest offices, have been prostituted for this purpose. What would be thought of an Irish Lawyer, being called over as Lord Chancellor of England? Yet, we are forced to take English Lawyers as our Lord Chancellors; so through all the departments of government, INJUSTICE TO IRELAND EVERY WHERE MEETS US; AND SO WILL THINGS CONTINUE UNTIL WE LEARN TO THINK LESS ABOUT PARTY AND MORE ABOUT OUR COUNTRY.*" To the list here given of Englishmen, holding Irish offices, are to be added, the Lord Lieutenant, the Chief Secretary and the Lord Chancellor: truly, the complaint of Swift, that "those who have the misfortune to be born here have the least title to any considerable (*we might add or inconsiderable*) employment," has passed in our days into a government maxim.

The legislation of the United Parliament for Ireland remains to be considered. With respect to the Roman Catholics, it is quite enough to state the simple fact, that they did not obtain their emancipation 'till 1829, leaving it to all who have impartially considered the history of the legislation in their favor before the union; and the general feeling amongst all sects of Irishmen of the justice of their claims, as already detailed, whether, if that event had not taken place they would not have attained their entire liberties, at least twenty years earlier.

But this is not the only ground of complaint with Irishmen.—During the forty-four years which have elapsed since the act of union, the whole Irish people, Protestant as well as Catholic, have been deprived of the constitutional rights of British subjects, either wholly or in part, nearly the entire time. For that long period have the Protestants of Ireland, with all their boasted love of Freedom—with all their religious attachment to the British constitution—



been living, not under that constitution, but in common with their Roman Catholic fellow-subjects, left fettered, hand and foot, to the mercy of an absolute despotism. The *Habeas Corpus* Act, the glorious gain of '82, has been three times suspended during that interval, insurrection acts have been in force at four different times, and for long periods; the atrocious Coercion Act in 1834; and to crown all, they have received the Arms' Act of 1843. On all this I shall not make one indignant comment; I wish to appeal, not to men's passions, but to their reason; I will even go so far as to assume, that all these acts were necessary—were called for by the circumstances of the times. But what conclusion can we draw from such a fact—surely this, that the Union has not, in any way, improved the peace or the security of the country. Yet, this was one of the chief blessings which it was promised would result from it. Its advocates admitted that it was not *necessary* for Ireland's prosperity, though they asserted it would enhance that prosperity; their great argument was that the peace of Ireland absolutely required it—and that it would secure that peace for ever. I ask any thinking man to answer has it done so. In looking too, at the disturbances in Ireland, before and since the Union, we must not forget that the former took place at a time when the giant throes of the French Revolution shook to its centre every state in Europe; that they were heightened by the obstinate resistance of the English minister to every beneficial change in the political institutions of the country; and at last fomented, with diabolical ingenuity, in order to terrify the friends of peace into the sacrifice of freedom. The disorders since the Union have sprung from no such causes. They have been the unhappy fruits of misgovernment, and the consequent decay and ruin of the nation's prosperity. To any man who has considered the progress of that decay, the universality of that ruin, it can only appear strange, that a people sinking under them, should have hesitated to seek relief from their sufferings, at the sacrifice of every social institution. Their endurance has, indeed, been as unparalleled, as their calamities. But it is more than strange: there is something terrible in the endurance of a suffering people. Soon or late the wrongs inflicted on them must be paid for, and if the time of payment be deferred, till they shall think fit to become their own paymasters, they will take fearful interest on their debt. Heaven will, I trust, avert such an event from the Irish people, but none can say when it may be brought about by the infatuity of man. There is still a voice that whispers hope into their ears; when it is silenced, none other may be found

to speak a like lesson ; and the strong hearts it calms, the strong arms it restrains, may turn for retribution and redress, from the laws of the senate, to the equity of the constitution.

Of the commercial legislation since the Union, I shall say little. That it has been mischievous to Ireland, may be sufficiently gathered from the destruction which has come upon her commerce and manufactures. That it has been of the worst kind, is ably shewn by Mr. John O'Connell, in his "Argument for Ireland." He has given to the details of it, a long and carefully executed appendix, which the reader may consult with profit. I pass the matter over, for two reasons ; first—that I could not, without transgressing the space to which I am limited, discuss it fairly ; secondly—because it is not necessary for my argument. If the legislation of the imperial parliament for Ireland have been good, if the spirit of the articles of Union have been honestly adhered to, it only strengthens the case against that measure. Ireland has prospered under a domestic parliament, has decayed under an imperial parliament. If the latter have made bad laws, there may be some chance of improvement, by a change in its mode of legislation ; if it have made good laws, there can be none.

There are many things in independence, besides laws, that raise a people—many things in dependence, that lower them. Self-control begets self-reliance, national pride begets personal dignity. The rivalry of the state, with other states, in industry, frugality, and enterprize, creates a like rivalry amongst the citizens. Liberty is not only, herself a blessing ; but, like Charity, she has a breast to nurse a thousand virtues. I care not, therefore, what has been the legislation for Ireland, as a province : it is enough, that, as a province, she is ruined—that, as a nation, she has been great and happy. It must not, however, be forgotten, that one of the most impoverishing circumstances under which Ireland labours, since the Union—absenteeism—has been greatly increased by that event ; (the money drained by this channel from Ireland before 1800, not having amounted to £2,000,000 a-year, while it is now much above £4,000,000) and this evil is remediless by an imperial parliament. That such a parliament would impose a tax upon the property of Irish absentees, is impossible. Such a tax is contrary to the *principle* of an Union ; what is, perhaps, of more consequence, it is contrary to the *interest* and *policy* of England. It is contrary to the principle of an Union, which is *incorporation*, to compel any citizen of the united territory, to reside or expend his money in any particular part of it. What would be thought, for instance, of a law imposing a tax on every Yorkshireman, who should spend his

fortune in Lancashire or Middlesex, instead of his own county? Yet, the principle of an Union such as ours, is to place any Irish county in the same relation to any English county, that the English counties bear to each other. But let us look to the more material questions of English interest and policy. Is it not absurd to suppose that a country gaining all we lose by the absentee system, should take any step to check it, especially when that system cannot be charged to any specific wrongful act of the country in question, but arises from the political relations between her and our country? Nay, more, while such relations continue, an absentee tax would be a positive wrong to the absentees themselves, whose absence from the capital of the country, (*for London is our capital, not Dublin, while the Union lasts,*) must, of necessity, deprive them of all chance of posts of honor or profit, must prevent them from aiding the representatives of Ireland, by their advice and information in matters relating to her affairs, and must exclude them from what every inhabitant of a country ought to have, the right of free and unrestrained access to the seat of legislation and government. It is, therefore, not only England's *interest* to permit the continuance of absenteeism, but she is able to justify her permission of it, by the most unanswerable reasoning. There are, however, far deeper motives of policy, which will prevent any English statesman from attempting to overturn the absentee system. *Doing so would, of itself, Repeal the Union.* Can any man suppose, that if the Irish proprietors became resident in Ireland, were daily and hourly witnesses of the poverty and the endurance of the people, saw with their own eyes the resources of their country, and the wealth they would gain by a development of those resources, and felt themselves living in a ruined province, without honor, without dignity, without power, *they would not demand the restitution of their country's nationality?* Half of them continue willing slaves to-day, because away from their own country, often ignorant of its miseries, and living amidst the pleasures of a great metropolis, they have forgotten the position which might be theirs, as the first citizens of a free state. Bring them back to their country by any means, and they will not rest contented long without bringing back her liberties. English statesmen must feel this, and will give them no temptation to return here.

I have now fairly, I hope—honestly I am certain—given the details of three distinct eras of Ireland's history. I am one of those who believe in the maxim, put forth by the great defender of the Union, Mr. Secretary Cooke, that "*an argument from experience in political reasoning, is superior to any argument in theory;*" and to



all men who hold the same doctrine, I would readily leave the verdict on the Union measure, upon the evidence I have adduced. An unhappy cant has, however, been got hold of by some people—the glib and easy phrase of *post hoc propter hoc*, with the aid of which, and a shrug of superior intellect, they at once get rid of such arguments. A concluding word to these men, may, perhaps, be useful, though in general they are of a class impenetrable to reasoning. Perhaps, they attach some weight to *fulfilled prediction*—prediction, too, which has nothing in it of chance conjecture; but is of that character, which gives the highest proof of human intellect—prediction, which truly describes the future, from just reasoning on the past. Ireland had many able men, for she had many men who did this. They prophesied the evils which have fallen upon their country, with the truth—almost with the eloquence of inspiration. Listen to the words of some amongst them.

From a reply to Mr. Secretary Cooke's "Arguments for and against the Union," by Mr. Charles Ball, I take the following extracts:—"As England will always be able to hold out to them such substantial temptations *to act as if they were Englishmen*, I confess, even with equal numbers in the cabinet and the parliament, *I should utterly despair of my country*. But when we know, that the arrangement of the cabinet, cannot be subject to regulation by act of parliament, without overturning the constitution, that if there could be a law for such a purpose, no Irishman would ever be introduced there, who had not first *done away the original sin of Irish birth, by a full and practical recantation of every principle of attachment to Ireland*, when we are told, that we shall have a proportion of only *one to five* in the parliament of the united kingdom; when all these matters are considered, I will ask you in your own words, *whether it can be less than the height of folly to part with the management of our own concerns for ever?* To your position, that freedom in one part of the empire, will secure the freedom of the rest, I offer as an answer and contradiction, the situation of England and her dependencies, until America separated, and Ireland threw off the yoke. During that time England was as free as she is now, and yet Ireland and America were in a state of slavery. You will say, neither Ireland nor America had representatives in the British parliament; to which I reply, that the *small* proportion of *one* representative to *five*, cannot *secure* either the actual or theoretical liberty of Ireland; for that our representatives will, at best, be no more than so many agents and advocates for our country, and not a true representation

of the people, possessing an insurmountable *veto*, in all questions affecting the interests of Ireland: but on the contrary, a measure of the united parliament, directly acting upon Ireland, might be carried by a majority of *five to one* with *every Irish member's voice against it*. The liberties of Ireland after a Union may be *endangered*—nay, *completely overthrown*, whenever the representatives of the people of Great Britain shall think *such a measure would conduce to the general interests of the empire*; a sentiment not *new* in England.” “Instead of living together in terms of amity and kindness, these two countries will be ever on the watch, *each to avail itself of the distress of the other*; England with a *view to power*—Ireland, in *pursuit of freedom*; and, of course, they will contract a mutual desire to involve one another in eternal misfortunes.”

I could give other emphatic and able remarks from this very singular pamphlet, but I have too many other *prophets* to refer to. The two next I shall cite were members of the bar, and the extracts are from the reported debate of that body upon the Union measure.

Mr. Peter Burrowes said, “that every possible modification of an Union, necessarily involved evils not to be compensated for: the merging of our representatives in an assembly where they will be more than quadrupled, and where, if unanimous, they can have little influence; the perpetual existence of the united legislature in another country, to the influence of whose wishes and opinions they will be subject—the enormous increase of absenteeism—of taxes—of our national debt.”

Mr. Goold (now Master in Chancery,) whose speech was one of rare eloquence and vigour, said, “the British minister must for ever be subservient to the will and interest of the British merchant—the British merchant must for ever be subservient to his own interest. I argue,” he continues, “from the necessary operations of the human passions on the human conduct, when I say, that the British merchant will force the British minister to be British, even on the subject of Irish affairs; and, when self-interest once speaks, it speaks in a voice of thunder;—the consideration of equity and justice are too feeble to be heard. In such a situation, as well might you expect from the oyster the sagacity of human intellect—as well might you expect from the famished tiger, the sympathy of human feeling, as from the British minister and British merchant, a due and impartial consideration, or a feeling and honest conduct touching the affairs of this our country.” “I will embark my last shilling in the cause of England—I would stand or fall with

her, but I will not be cajoled by her; she shall not reduce me to bankruptcy, and say she did so for my advantage, she shall not reduce me to beggary, under the pretext of an advantageous bargain. If I am to be a bankrupt and a beggar, I shall be so with the solitary and inestimable consolation, that with my eyes open I have been bankrupt, and beggared myself for a friend in distress. I will not submit to the degrading state of becoming bankrupt and beggar, under the pretext and cover of a commercial speculation."

A pamphlet by Mr. Spencer (likewise a barrister,) has the following, among many just anticipations: "as to the effect of a Union in bringing English capital into this country, I observe, that Irish industry and enterprize, encouraged, have produced, and will still continue to produce and augment capital; and that English capital, which is by no means indispensable, will be attracted only by the assured tranquility of the country, to which an Union doth in no wise conduce, but whose immediate consequence would be, to increase the number of absentees, already the bane of their country, and, in great part, the cause of its occasionally disturbed repose."

"For that an union would produce a great addition to the number of our absentees, cannot be doubted, by the most sceptical, and it is most remarkable that the argument is used by the celebrated Dean Tucker, to induce England to an union, for, in his proposal to incorporate the British isles into one kingdom, printed in 1750, he observes that 'the inducement of being near the parliament, the court, the public funds, would bring many more Irish families to reside, and spend their fortunes here, (*i. e.* in England,) than do now. In short, whatever wealth Ireland would draw from other countries by its produce, manufactures and happy situation, all that, would continually centre in England." So that it seems there were true prophets besides the Irish. Mr. Spencer further adds, "by a perusal of the writers in the sister country, on the subject, from Sir Mathew Decker to De Lolme, the curious reader will easily satisfy himself, that all the arguments in favor of the measure, centre in the convenience and alleviation of public burthens to England."

Mr. Pemberton Rudd, another barrister, who also wrote a pamphlet in reply to Mr. Cooke, addressed him thus, "you lament that the Irish parliament is *now* supposed under British influence, and you allow, that (*even now,*) near one million of the rents of the kingdom, are exported to absentees. Permit me to ask, would your proposed Union lessen or ameliorate these causes of complaint. If three hundred of the first men in this kingdom, sitting



in College-green in Dublin, must be supposed under British influence, what must we conclude would be the case, with sixty of these *very* persons transplanted to St. Stephen's chapel, London." And again, referring to Mr. Cooke's views of the insecure position of the Irish Protestants, only one-fourth of the population of Ireland, and holding nearly the whole land of the country, he says: "the industry, the abilities, the good fortune, and good sense of numbers of the Roman Catholics, have enabled them to make large fortunes. They have seen their interests, used their abilities, and purchased land; but taking the case on your own shewing, and supposing the Protestant occupiers to hold nine-tenths of all the land in the kingdom, would it mend the matter to send many, or any of these landlords off of their own estates, to serve in a British or united parliament, and to expend the rents and produce of those very estates, in the necessaries, the manufactures, the arts, and the luxuries, not of their own tenantry, or of their own country, but of another people, in another kingdom. Would it serve to tranquillize the mind; would it conciliate the attachment of the Catholic tenant, who now has his landlord on the spot, willing to relieve him; would it serve *him*, think you, to send a *gripping steward* to his farm, and have his last guinea eviscerated from him, to be changed perhaps that hour into an English bill; not *here*, to be bestowed in the relief of want, encouragement of arts, or even the consumption of luxuries, but *there* to be eaten at a feast, drunk with a mistress, or lost on a die." "This believe me, is no highly coloured picture of the effect to be expected from an Union, ONE AND INDIVISIBLE."

The extracts which I have given are from Protestant writers. One of the most able, though singular essays which appeared on the subject of the Union, was, however, from the pen of a Roman Catholic priest, a friar, I believe, of the Franciscan Order, the Rev. Dennis Taaffe. He was a bitter opponent of the measure, and attributing it too truly in a great degree, to the discord created by the *Protestant ascendancy faction*, (*not the whole Protestant population*,) he has been most savage in his attack on that faction. In the concluding part of his pamphlet, he represents one of the leaders of this party remonstrating with the British minister, on the Union measure, and from this part of his work, I cannot forbear quoting at some length. Having first given the remonstrance, he comes to the minister's reply, thus ending: "As for the consequences likely to result to Ireland from the measure, that you must acknowledge, is a matter of very secondary consideration, since that conquered country ought in all reason, exist solely for our benefit. Let her

enjoy her religious quarrels, the sanguinary rage of her factions. What more would she have; does she not possess Orangemen and Defenders, Rebels and Loyalists, Protestants, Papists, Presbyterians, Swaddlers; are not all these indulged in the comfortable satisfaction of cutting their own throats, for the love of God and the Virgin Mary, or for church and king, as they like best. How unreasonable to grumble after such concessions." After some further observations in this strain, he makes the ascendancy chief reply. "And is it thus you reward your faithful servants the loyal ascendancy men? Is it for this we have risked our lives and fortunes, and in fact, shed our blood, and squandered our properties?—Oh, ungrateful John Bull! have we not always acted as your faithful garrison, retaining Ireland in your chains, for your profit, enabling you to deprive it of trade, manufactures, and national government, to turn it into a draw-farm for the supply of your navy and your markets, to drain it of men and money at your good pleasure. Oh, were that despised people, enlightened and united, not you, nor any power on earth, could tread them down on their native soil, with impunity. Without us and our forefathers, of glorious memory, their commerce would vie with your own. I appeal to your own writers on commerce, for the truth of this assertion. Her fleets and armies would make her formidable; witness her natural advantages of every kind. She would now, as formerly, be foremost in science.—Is Ireland now a prey to bigot fury, sanguinary politics and religious faction? It is ascendancy challenges the merit of lighting up the torch of discord. Religious bigotry, the sure and ready instrument of civil disunion, would, ere now, have been extinguished, but for the fostering care of intolerance, which plied it constantly with its proper food—ignorance, and hatred.—Thus placed in the hostile relation of tyrant and slave, of persecutor and persecuted, one side claiming a monopoly of the good things of this world, in favor of their state religion, the other arrogating to themselves the exclusive enjoyment of the kingdom to come, as the reward of their present misery, a coalition between them, thus inflamed against one another, by the conflict of intolerance, and the conflict of interests, is not to be apprehended. For these, and nameless other services, you now propose to requite us, by robbing us of our expected rewards, just as we were proceeding to entail on ourselves and posterity, the offices, honors, and emoluments of church and state, (to the exclusion of such even of the favored sect, as had opposed our measures at any time,) through the monopoly of parliamentary representation. What becomes of your honor and plighted faith, never to forsake us while

we supported you?" But, mark the significant and admirably verified reply which he puts in the mouth of the minister.—*"You, and your friends, and whoever else cannot be safely treated with neglect, shall be provided for; as for the rabble of your party we may safely leave them to the management of their clergy who will work them up to our purposes by plying their anti-popish zeal with caustic doses of controversial invective. The bargain was struck, the cabinet broke up, and poor Ireland is lost for ever."* "It is then," he continues, "the duped ascendancy bigots will have cause to lament their fatal mistake, when they suffered themselves to be hallooed like bloodhounds to worry their fellow-citizens, and crush their patriot spirit for the gratification and benefit of their designing leaders, who now dispose of them like so many head of cattle. In the articles of compensation for bartering away irrecoverably the rights and prosperity of the country, they are forgotten and left to share its ruin and poverty, since they would not its greatness and independence."—Let us now look at what follows; who can think that it was written in 1798:

"Orangemen take a prospective view of the blessings you have prepared for yourselves and your children. The proprietary of the kingdom gone to reside in England to attend the business in parliament, the court, &c., with all who aspire to the career of ambition and honor, or the pleasures of elegant and rational society, or the amusements of a great court and capital. Emigration will become the tone; and, it will be quite unfashionable, odious to reside in Ireland, enough to give a fine bred lady the vapours. The vulgar provincialism of Irish airs, accent, &c., &c., will be avoided, like the plague; to escape the slightest taint, or even the suspicion of it, become an important concern. A permanent residence in London or Bath, will be the indispensable with every squire and squireess who can afford it." "On the other hand, a beggared, deserted province, can have no inducements to retain the opulent; and such as cannot afford the expense of that fashionable country, will send their children thither for education, or rather, send their wives thither to be delivered that their offspring may avoid the disgrace of being born here, and be educated quite free from any Irish impressions. Untainted with the candour, affability and hospitality, that distinguished that degenerate people; but trained up in the genteel prejudice against every thing Irish, he will be early taught to treat the country of his fathers with injustice and contempt. Thus, almost the whole rental of the kingdom will be spent in foreign parts to enrich pampered England: trade and the arts, deprived of their customers must follow: the capital will fall into ruin:



agriculture will dwindle : population must resign the soil to bullocks and sheep. The vast sums laid out in improving the capital and its vicinity in the construction of canals, quays, bridges, roads ; the melioration of harbours, rivers ; in the encouragement of agriculture, arts, fisheries ; in the endowments of colleges, schools, hospitals, &c.,—all is lost,—expended in vain,—all will become next to useless.”

“An expectation,” he continues, “will be raised that English capital and manufactures will find their way hither, enticed by the cheapness of provision and labour. Very improbable indeed.—There are far more powerful inducements to retain them at the other side: the vicinity of the great emporium of the world, the fountain of credit, trade, &c., &c.; the mutual dependence and subserviency of all the arts, and manufactures, each ministering to, and borrowing from each, either necessary instruments, or useful hints, or ready circulation.”

“The manufacturer derives immense advantages from the co-operation of all the parts that form the complex and stupendous fabric of English trade. Capital and credit, which a man of known probity and ability may command to almost any amount ; abundance of expert hands and ingenious heads, the utensils, machinery, processes, &c., employed in high perfection, expeditious, cheap, and every day receiving new improvements ; the general spirit of enterprize and commercial speculation that turns every thing to account ; these advantages more than counterbalance the difference in the price of labour and provisions, and enable the London or Birmingham manufacturer to undersell the German or Russian.—Any branch exiled into Ireland would suffer more by its separation from the living body, and vital circulation, and harmonious co-operation of all the co-members ; the co-efficient parts that constitute the integral frame of a flourishing British commerce, than the trifling difference in the price of provision could possibly compensate.”

“Great, indeed, must be the local temptations that could prevail on that calculating description of persons to renounce the vantage ground of their position. What would provincialed Ireland have to offer?—an impoverished, ragged population, with manners and habits not over propitious to the commercial pursuits ; obnoxious to the worst prejudices of Englishmen ; a country, however fertile, drained by the tributary rents of a host of absentees ; and *crushed by a full participation of English debts and taxes, increased with her increasing inability to pay them* ; no home market, none of the co-operating trades, &c. In the teeth of such discouragements will

English manufacturers come to reside among a people, whom they have been taught to hate and despise from their infancy, and whom, *when they are very liberal* they call *semibarbarous, destitute of industry, punctuality, and even honesty*—‘*Credat qui velit, non ego.*’ You will, Irishmen, gain an inundation of taxes and tax-gatherers—No more !”

The predictions of this man have proved so strangely and sadly true, that one shudders, lest the apathy of Irishmen may yet cause the realization of that parallel, which he has foretold between the future fate of Dublin and the ruin of Babylon, as foreshadowed in the sublime language of Isaiah :—“and Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldee excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, it shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation ; but wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there, and the wild beasts of the island shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces.” May God avert such a catastrophe by the union of Irishmen.

## CHAPTER III.

## FORM OF CONSTITUTION.

“ Resolved—that a claim of any body of men, other than the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland, to make laws to bind this kingdom, is unconstitutional, illegal, and a grievance.”

*Dungannon Resolution, 15th Feb. 1782.*

“ WHERE IS THE NATIONAL FLAG OF IRELAND? If the flag of England be, as it is, dearer to every brave Englishman than his life, is the wish for a similar badge of honor to Ireland, to be scouted as a chimera? Can the same sentiment be great and glorious on one side the channel, and wild and absurd on the other?”

*Theobald Wolfe Tone.*

I HAVE now arrived at the last and most difficult part of my subject; namely, the consideration of the form of constitution, which would be best for Ireland, in case of a Repeal of the existing Union between her and Great Britain. It is in the details, however, that I conceive the difficulty here to lie. The principles upon which a constitution should be framed, I hold to be quite simple, and reducible to these two propositions :—

First—that it should give her complete control over her own affairs.

Second—that it should give perfect security for the continuance of that control.

I know of no constitution that can fulfil these two objects, save one which shall render her independent, in every respect, of every other nation in the world. I believe anything short of this ought not to satisfy, and I trust will not satisfy, the Irish people. There is nothing contrary to the just rights of England in such a constitution, as I now suggest. England neither has, nor ought to have, any authority over this country, save what, through the instrumentality of the imperial parliament, she enjoys under the act of Union. From the year 1783, to the passing of that act, the right of Ireland to be governed only by the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland, was solemnly recognized by the British legislature.

It is quite true, that she was, and continues to be, bound to obey the British *monarch*;—that the king of England *de facto*, is *de jure* king of Ireland; but this is a mere limitation of succession. The



law defined who should be king of Ireland, but the obedience of the Irish people was due to him, as king of Ireland, not as king of England. In the latter capacity he was, by the renunciation act of 1783, left without authority or control of any sort, within the kingdom of Ireland.

Had this principle, established in theory, been carried out in practice subsequently to 1783, there would have been no Union; Ireland would have flourished—England would have gained by her prosperity; the two countries would have remained in amity with each other, and the empire would be strong and harmonious, instead of being, as it now is, discordant and weak.

If this principle be once more established, and practically enforced, the two nations will yet grow into a compact and prosperous empire; if not, many years will not elapse without a total separation. Politicians may theorize as they please, ministers may get legislation to suit their fancy, but Ireland will not remain a province.

This principle, of course, requires that the sovereign of Ireland, should be advised upon Irish affairs, by a minister responsible to the Irish parliament only. In the constitution of 1782, no such provision was made. The royal assent to Irish Bills was given under the great seal of England, not of Ireland, thereby leaving no efficient control to the Irish parliament. I say no efficient control, because it had a sort of control in the power of refusing supplies; but this was of little importance, when a declaration of war on the part of the British crown, involved Ireland in such war to the fullest extent, gave rights of attack and reprisal on her shipping to the hostile country, virtually closed her ports against its commerce, and rendering her liable to invasion, placed her in a position which made it necessary for her to vote supplies in self-defence.

The right of declaring war or peace is, of course, vested solely in the crown; but, it is, in fact, exercised by the minister, without whose advice the sovereign never acts. The minister is, however, responsible to the parliament, and takes no step in which he is not sure of its sanction; and while this is the case, the parliament must be considered as the real possessor of the prerogative, and the crown as the mere depository of it, for purposes of convenience and expedition: as it may frequently be necessary to exercise it with a promptness, which would be inconsistent with the delay, attendant on obtaining a previous consent of the legislature. Now, an Irish minister responsible to the parliament of Ireland only, would not advise the sovereign to declare war *on the part of Ireland*, except when sure of the approbation of the Irish parliament; and, on the other hand, would advise such a step, when he was certain

of its approval, notwithstanding, the British minister might oppose such a declaration, *on the part of England*.

But it will be said, that, practically, such a course could not be carried out, for that if the English monarch declared war against any foreign state, he would be held to bind Ireland, as well as England, by that declaration.

Now, in the first place, the "great argument in political reasoning,"—that from experience—is against this, for, as has been repeatedly stated, the king of England has been at war, as such, with foreign nations, and, yet, has been at peace with the same nations, as Elector of Hanover. The king of England, and the king of Ireland, though one individual, would, in fact, be two, as distinct *political* persons as are the emperor of Russia, and the president of the United States to-day.

Now, the law of nations has concern with political persons, and political rights only, and takes no notice whatever of individuals in their private capacity, so that it would be as contrary to that law, to act hostilely against Ireland, (in the case I have put) because the king of England had, in that character, declared war, as it would be to act hostilely against any other neutral state. The hostile act, if committed, would be not a warlike aggression, but a simple piracy; and the parties guilty of it, if seized, would be treated, not as prisoners of war, but as pirates, and *summarily hanged*. Such a fate in perspective, might cause some unwillingness on the part of those concerned, to confound the relative acts of the two countries.

To shew the reader, how very simple is the principle of the distinction above taken, between the British and Irish monarch, it is only necessary to give an exactly analogous case, which every one will comprehend. A king, or whatever other officer of state, is the chief governor of a country, is a mere trustee of its rights for that country. He is circumstanced just as the trustee of any ordinary property. The latter may act as trustee for fifty properties, as well as for one: he may have legal rights against another party, in respect of all these properties; and yet, he may seek to enforce them only in respect of one, or five, or ten, and in any proceedings he may take, he does not involve, in the least degree, any one of the properties, in the costs or consequences attending his suit, in respect of any other.

The principle of the municipal and international law, is precisely the same in this respect; and, if in the case of the latter, the principle be transgressed, there remains for the wronged country, the very effective remedy against further transgression—above mentioned.

A consequence of the severance of the two kingdoms to the extent described, would of course be that each should maintain her own army and navy, distinct from the other. This would not, it is true, be required in ordinary circumstances, nor at all in time of peace, but as it would become necessary in the contingency alluded to, of one country declaring war against a people, with whom the other desired to remain at peace, it would, perhaps, be more convenient to make it a permanent regulation, than to provide only for its contingent adoption. That it would be necessary, in the contingency referred to, is plain, because neither country could remain at peace with a foreign state, and yet permit its troops to be employed by the other, in hostility to that state.

This system of each country having its own distinct army and navy would, in fact, be attended with no practical inconvenience, as will be easily shewn. Its actual operation will be nearly the same, as if they had but one common force for both. If the latter were the case, each country would, of course, contribute rateably to the support of that force. Now, common justice would require, that the expenditure of the force in each country, should be proportioned to the contribution of each towards its maintenance. The only way, however, in which this could be done, would be, by stationing in each country that proportion of the force—military or naval,—charged on that country's establishment, which would, in effect, be the same as permitting each to have a distinct force of its own.

The only difficulty to which this could give rise, would be with reference to foreign stations. Let us consider this. In doing so, we must take each branch of the service separately, as in this particular they hold very different positions. The ocean is the common territory of every state. Any power possessed of shipping has, therefore, a *general right*, (with certain restrictions, as to number, for the prevention of intimidation, and others created by treaty, with particular states, &c.) to station that shipping as it pleases on the ocean. Now, those of them, which it keeps at a distance from its own shores, (I speak, of course, of time of peace) it so stations, either for the general protection of its commerce, or for the special protection of its colonies. That portion occupied with the latter duty, comes under the same head with the land forces, and will be treated of with them. The other portion could be a cause of no embarrassment, in the relations between England and Ireland. The latter country would, of course, find it her interest to join in protecting their joint commerce, and would send abroad her fair proportion of shipping for that purpose, always, of course,



taking care that those branches of commerce which were peculiarly hers, should get equal protection with those which peculiarly belonged to England.

The land forces, (and the second branch of the navy,) could not, perhaps, be so easily arranged. Their duties abroad, are confined almost entirely to colonial protection. The extent to which Ireland should furnish troops or ships for this purpose must, of course, be regulated by her interest in the colonies. Great Britain may, as she did before, assert that the colonies are hers exclusively, and refuse Ireland the right to trade with them. In that case, of course, she could not expect Ireland to contribute to their protection. This would certainly be the better arrangement for the latter country. Sugar, coffee, and rum, she could get far cheaper from other countries, and scarcely, if it all, inferior in quality. Baltic timber, the best in the world, she could procure at infinitely less cost, than that of Canada and New Brunswick—the worst which it is possible to find. In return, she could secure a market for her goods in the countries from which she procured these commodities: thus gaining a profitable trade, obtaining cheap necessities of life for her inhabitants, and paying none of the charges for maintaining the colonies—possessions which cost Great Britain an immense outlay, and contribute nothing to her strength or security.

If any other arrangement respecting the colonies were thought better, it could, no doubt, be conveniently negotiated between the two countries, who, though their forces were quite distinct from each other, could make any proper regulations respecting them, for mutual benefit, during time of peace, or of a war in which they jointly engaged; the only thing which it would be essential to guard against, being the employment of the troops of either by the other, in a war to which the former desired not to be a party.

England would, indeed, by this system, lose her power of dragging Ireland into wars without her consent; but is there any Irishman who can think this an evil? For my part, I would look on any constitution, not securing her from being coerced by England, in this, and every other respect, as a mere mockery of independence. Any difficulties too, which may result from the plan proposed, would be advantages to humanity. In a just war, Ireland would readily join England; in an unjust war, she ought not.

I have looked to the consequences as to declarations of war, &c., which would result from a completely independent system of government, as those which might give rise to most cavil. I now come to consider it in cases of ordinary administration.

Without a minister responsible to the Irish parliament, it is clear,

that where the interests of the two countries, clashed in any respect, an act protective of those of Ireland could scarcely, by possibility, be passed. The English minister would not, it may easily be supposed, advise his Sovereign to assent to it, contrary to the wishes of that body to which alone he was responsible; and, without that advice the Sovereign would, of course, not assent to it.

Now, this brings me to the consideration of the strange anomaly which existed, as I have already said, in the mode of getting the royal assent to bills, after the constitution of 1782 was obtained by Ireland. During the whole existence of that constitution, the *practice* which prevailed in this particular was in direct contradiction to the *terms* of the constitution itself. The constitution, as confirmed by the repeal of the 6 George I., and the subsequent act of renunciation, vested the right to make laws for Ireland in the King, Lords, and Commons of *Ireland*; while in practice they were made by the Lords and Commons of Ireland, and the King of *England*. The proceeding was this: the bills having passed the two branches of the Irish legislature, were transmitted to England, where they received the royal assent under *the great seal of England*, which was in the custody of the English Lord Chancellor; now, the great seal of England could evidence nothing but the assent of the *king of England*, and was no valid evidence of an act of the *king of Ireland*, whose assent was that alone (if the spirit of the constitution were adhered to), which should make the law binding on the Irish nation. If this reasoning be sound, it shews that every act of parliament passed, during the period referred to, was a direct and flagrant violation of the constitution of Ireland.

This system of getting the royal assent was, it is true, (as the reader will remember) that expressly demanded by the Irish patriots themselves. There can be no doubt, however, of its inconsistency *theoretically* and *practically* with the constitution they fancied they had obtained;—a constitution recognizing only the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland as the legislature of Ireland.

The next result of the divided sovereignty would be with respect to diplomatic relations. To have a perfectly distinct diplomatic body for each kingdom would, doubtless, be a considerable expense; yet, I confess, I would desire it. It would give great additional dignity to Ireland; and she would be much more secure in having the management of her foreign interests confided to the care of Irishmen interested in her honour, than if it were chiefly, as with a joint staff it must be, left to natives of England.

There is, however, no reason why the same representative *may*

*not* manage the affairs of each country, even when one was at war with that at whose court he resided, as he might formally withdraw as representative of the country at war, and continue to act for the other. A better arrangement would, perhaps, be in the case of the recall of the ambassador of either country, in consequence of a declaration of war on its part, to despatch, at the time of his recall, a native of the other country, to take charge of its diplomatic affairs, upon his retirement. I own I would, myself, prefer having a different representative for each, at all foreign courts.

As I would permit no control in Irish affairs to the British minister, I necessarily contemplate the formation of an Irish cabinet. No special provisions occur to me, which it would be requisite to enforce with regard to the cabinet, except one. I think it would be highly desirable, if not indeed necessary, that no person except a prince of the blood, should hold the office of Lord Lieutenant, or any place in the cabinet, or act as a member of the Irish Privy Council, who was not a native of Ireland, or if not a native of Ireland, who had not resided in Ireland, for at least five years previously to his so acting, and was not at the time of his appointment possessed of, or heir to, a property in Ireland of such annual value, as may be thought fit in each case, say £5,000 a year for Lord Lieutenant, £1,000 a year for a member of the cabinet, and £500 a year for a Privy Councillor.

I do not consider it necessary or advisable, to suggest any alteration in the general powers of the House of Lords or Commons, from what they respectively possessed under the constitution of 1782. It would no doubt be desirable in obtaining a new constitution for Ireland, to render all the branches of the legislature as perfect as practicable, and to leave as little as possible which might demand subsequent reform; but on the other hand, it would embarrass too much the great general question of Irish independence, to introduce into an essay upon it, any matter of detail which an individual might think useful, and upon which vast differences of opinion may arise, among the warmest advocates of the general principle.

I contemplate therefore the re-establishment of the House of Lords, with the same legislative and judicial authority, as it before had.

I also contemplate the re-establishment of the House of Commons, with the same powers as it before possessed.

The places returning members to the latter, should not, of course, be the same as had that power before the Union. The whole system of rotten boroughs, &c. should be overturned, and a fair



popular representation secured. I myself can see no objection to the plan proposed by the Repeal Association, for the restoration of the Irish House of Commons, so far as regards the number of representatives, and the places which should return them; the *franchises* and *mode of voting*, it is not so easy to decide on. I confess I do not believe the present state of popular education in either England or Ireland, is such as to make universal suffrage desirable for either country. The *principle* of the latter I fully approve of; but I do think the time has not arrived, when it could usefully be adopted in practice. Where there exists a pretty equal distribution of property and education in a country, the franchise of the people may be easily regulated, but where, as in Ireland, this is not the case, it becomes difficult to arrange it. The antagonism between wealth and poverty, becomes so great, that much care is required to prevent it from leading to a collision, which would altogether overturn the system of society. The way to do this, can only be discovered, by ascertaining in what the strength of each consists, and how it operates. Now, the strength of wealth, consists in an influence which seems to me to operate gradually, but steadily and continuously: that of poverty on the other hand, is an absolute force, which (except under very peculiar circumstances and extraordinary guidance) can effect its object only by sudden, violent, and dangerous action. By diminishing the power of wealth, (its influence) you lessen the antagonism of poverty, and by securing to the latter a degree of power which it can exercise quietly and steadily, you check its tendency to violent and sudden action. This must, however, be gradually conferred. If every man who can use a musket or stick, has a vote conferred on him, he will in all likelihood use the vote, in preference to the stick or musket; but this, though it may lessen the violence of the result, will not lessen its suddenness. The suddenness of a great political or social change is, however, generally more mischievous than its violence, so that by the substitution of one power for another, little is gained. The result to which this reasoning leads me is, that situated as we are at present, with great inequalities in our social system, the proper policy to adopt would be to diminish the political power of the wealthy class, to increase as far as possible that of the middle class, who with some prejudice in favor of the wealthy, have strong sympathy with the poorer class, and to go on gradually conferring it on the latter, as education and property grow more equalized. I have no doubt that before long, the improved condition of the people under their own laws, would make universal suffrage a safe and beneficial measure.

Vote by ballot may be necessary, but I would, if possible, avoid it. If a certainty of tenure existed in the country, it may be done without. By certainty of tenure, I do not mean fixity, what I mean is, that there should be no such thing as a *tenancy at will*; a mode of holding which leaves every thing at the mercy of the landlord. Beyond these few general observations, it is not my intention to make any suggestions, as to the extent of the right of voting, or the method of exercising it. I look upon it, though important, to be a trifle compared to the general question of nationality, and would readily sacrifice one half of the franchise of the elector, sooner than abate by one jot, the independence of the parliament.

The next thing which it seems to me, the constitution should provide, would be some plan to secure the perfect freedom and equality of persons of all religious denominations in Ireland.

I would in the first place guarantee this freedom and equality, by the terms of the act establishing the Irish constitution, and make it a fixed and unalterable part of that constitution.

I would next make it necessary for every member of each branch of the legislature, on taking his seat, to take an oath to maintain that freedom and equality inviolate, and never to make use of any power or privilege possessed by him, to interfere with it directly or indirectly. I would have a like oath administered to all functionaries, holding any offices of trust in the government. I need of course say nothing of the protection to the Protestants of Ireland from the fact of the sovereign, and the great majority of the House of Peers being of their persuasion; as it has so often been put forward already, that it cannot be necessary to advert to it again.

In speaking of religious freedom and *equality*, as forming the basis of the new constitution, I need not say that I contemplate the existence of no state religion, or of no exclusive church establishment. All creeds must, as to state patronage and state support, be on an equality, if indeed state support to any should be considered advisable.

I would myself prefer some system of state support for the clergy of all persuasions, if I could see any means by which it could be given, without permitting any state interference with the freedom of those receiving it, or (what I look upon as more difficult) without making it a cause of endless jealousies amongst the different classes of religionists. Thus, suppose such a maintenance were regulated by allowing a clergyman with a certain stipend to every congregation of a certain number, (irrespective of creed) in the country, every increase or diminution of these congregations, must cause an alteration in the state provision, and as the proselytizing spirit

would be greatly increased by motives of gain, contentions and recriminations would arise, which government could not easily keep clear of. This proselytizing spirit may indeed exist to nearly as great an extent, under the voluntary system, but it would not involve the government in the contentions it may excite, a matter which I look on as most desirable.

The voluntary system if adopted, would of course make it necessary to take from the present established church, all revenues derived from tithes, as falling on persons of other religions, and moreover as being a *compulsory* tax upon Protestants themselves. I see no reason however, for taking away the *lands* belonging to the establishment in such case, as it can make no difference to the tenant whether his landlord is a clergyman or a layman, and it is too late to enquire into the uses for which those lands were originally granted. The same principle of course applies to lands held by dissenting congregations also, and I do not think that the state, if it made a provision for the different clergy of the country, should in apportioning it take into consideration such lands.

The equalizing of state patronage to the different religions, would likewise make it necessary to take from the Protestant bishops the right to sit in the House of Lords. Either this should be done, or a like privilege granted to the dignitaries of the Roman Catholic church, and certain representatives of the dissenting clergy; I however, consider the solemn and important nature of religious ministration to be such that no other care should distract the attention of those engaged in it. As men, they must of necessity be liable to the promptings of vanity and ambition, when placed in situations to call them forth, and such situations should not therefore be opened to them. The principle on which I would exclude clergymen from the House of Lords, applies of course as strongly to the House of Commons, and I would allow no clergyman of any persuasion to sit in it.

No other matter occurs to me, which I think necessary to be made the subject of any special proviso in the constitution; I shall therefore now proceed to state the objections which I conceive to exist against any plan which has hitherto been suggested for an alteration of the present relations between Great Britain and Ireland.

These plans all come under one or other of the following heads :

1.—*Simple Repeal* and a return to the constitution of 1782, (with however the very material alteration to be effected by adopting the Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform acts).

2.—A dependent Irish legislature for local purposes, leaving the



control of the general affairs of the empire to an imperial parliament *constituted as at present*.

3.—A full, fair, and equal federal union between the countries, with local parliaments for each, and a general federal parliament for imperial concerns.

A fourth plan has also been put forward, that of rotatory parliaments to sit every third year in Ireland. This I shall devote no space to, as I can see no possible benefit which could result from it, save a trifling expenditure of money in Dublin, wholly unworthy of being made the subject of agitation, by an entire people.

The restoration of the constitution of 1782, (with the improvements already mentioned,) would doubtless be a great blessing, but it would still leave Ireland to be bound by the British minister in the important matters of war and peace; the regulation of the army and navy; diplomatic relations; &c. and (if the former practice in obtaining the royal assent were revived,) give him a veto on all acts, which had passed the two branches of the Irish legislature. It would moreover fail as a final arrangement, and expose the people before long to the evils of renewed agitation. They would be brought by it too near the point of complete freedom, to be hindered from going the entire way.

The *dependent* Irish legislature, emanating from the present imperial parliament, with a control over local affairs, all external legislation to remain in the imperial legislature, is open to one fatal objection: there would be no security for its permanence. It must be the creature of the body constituting it, and liable to be destroyed by it also, whenever thought desirable and safe. Admitting that any security could be offered for its continuance, it would be open *in a greater degree*, to all the objections that lie against the last plan, *viz.* that of a fair, full, and equal federal union with local parliaments for local affairs.

In making my objections to this last system, I will, to avoid all cavil, assume such a scheme of federalism as the most sanguine federalist in Ireland I am sure could have no hope of seeing realized, and I think I shall succeed in shewing that in its best supposable form it would not give Ireland anything approaching to the benefits of an independent domestic parliament.

I will suppose the Irish *local* parliament to have entire and unqualified control over every thing within the shores of Ireland, except in such matters as I shall immediately mention.

I will suppose *population alone* to be taken as the basis of representation in the imperial House of Commons, and each country to return members to it, in proportion to its inhabitants.

I will suppose the three kingdoms, England, Ireland, and Scot-

land, to be represented in the imperial House of Lords in their capacity of sovereign states, and in consequence to have *each an equal number of members in that house.*

I will suppose the functions of the imperial parliament to be limited to—

- 1.—Voting the supplies for the army and navy.
- 2.—Making all laws relative to navigation.
- 3.—Deciding on the system of tariffs for the empire.
- 4.—Making all laws to affect the colonies and their trade.
- 5.—Voting the supplies to meet all *Imperial* expenditure, *beyond the limits of England, Ireland, and Scotland.*

The royal prerogative would, of course, as now, prevail throughout all three countries; and its exercise would, as to all imperial matters, be as extensive. To it, therefore, would belong—

- 1.—The right of making war or peace.
- 2.—The stationing of the army and navy.
- 3.—The appointment of judges, officers of state, foreign ambassadors, colonial functionaries, in fact, nineteen-twentieths of the whole patronage of the empire.

Let us now see what must be the result of this :—

With a House of Commons consisting of three hundred members, returned on the basis of population, the number for each country would be roughly; England, 159; Ireland, 109; Scotland, 32. England could, therefore, in this house, constructed on the basis most favorable to Ireland, carry any proposition to her advantage, against the united representatives of both Ireland and Scotland. If now the reader look back to the imperial questions, which may be thus invariably decided in England's favor, he will find that they embrace almost every subject, navigation laws, import and export duties, &c., &c., which, *in past times, have been made the subjects of injurious legislation to Ireland*; and yet, there is not one of them which could be taken from the imperial parliament.

But this is not the worst view of the matter. The position of Scotland, the nature of her manufactures and trade, and many other circumstances, make her interests nearly identical with those of England, while those of Ireland are of quite another kind. To give one example of this, I will take the question of free trade between the three kingdoms. So long as this lasts, it is impossible for Ireland to become a manufacturing country to any extent. I am not so absurd as to suppose, that *permanent* protective duties are a benefit to any country; on the contrary, I believe them to be highly mischievous; but no manufacturing *system* can be *nursed* in any state so near a great manufacturing country, like Great Britain, as that the goods of the latter come into its markets, at the lowest possible



freights, &c., without the *temporary* adoption of a protective system. Both England and Scotland have, however, a direct interest in preventing the growth of Irish manufactures, and, of course, would unite in opposing any measure which would tend to foster them. On some of the most important questions, therefore, which could arise regarding her interests, Ireland would, with this very favourably constituted House of Commons, be in a minority of about one to two. The above, too, is only one of many questions which might be referred to, in which the interests of England and Scotland would cause them to coalesce against Ireland.

But it will be argued, the constitution of the House of Lords, in which each of the three kingdoms has an equal number of members, will guard against this—I deny it altogether.

In the first place, where English and Scotch interests are both opposed to those of Ireland, as in the case just put, Ireland will, with complete union amongst her representatives, have a majority of two to one against her in the upper, as well as in the lower house. When Scotland, *as a nation*, is *indifferent*, and her representatives in either house, consequently, at liberty to vote in accordance with their *personal inclinations*, (the question being between England and Ireland only) England, whose majority in the Commons is secure, has only to influence some half dozen of the Scotch peers, by any mode of *persuasion* she may find most convenient, to secure an easy victory. I shall proceed to shew, that *she will have all the powers of persuasion on her side*.

The power of the crown is as we have already seen, the power of the minister who advises the crown. That minister is responsible to parliament, and can only retain office by retaining its confidence. Let us see how these principles would operate in imperial matters. The minister who was to advise the crown on these, would say, “by acting on all questions of imperial policy, in accordance with the views of England, I will secure a decisive majority on every point in the House of Commons, backed, moreover, by the *numerical* majority of the whole empire: my policy, of course, is to keep this certain power in my hands, and to guard against any difficulty in the upper house, I have only to ensure the friendly votes of eight or ten Irish, and as many Scotch lords, to strengthen the English interests there.”\*

\* When I say the minister could, with the aid of eight or ten Irish, and as many Scotch peers, *secure* a majority for England in the lords, I assume the house to consist of a small number, say, from 30 to 35 for each country. If it were to consist of a large number, say 300 members; it would create a proportionate number of absentees, and the difficulty of getting a majority for England be only *increased*.



The imperial minister thus, it is easy to perceive, will, in fact, be an English minister. He will have the disposal of all that vast patronage belonging to the crown, already set forth; or, supposing, for argument sake, that each of the local parliaments should get a *reto* upon judicial and other local appointments, within their own territory; he will, at least, and of necessity, have the whole patronage of the army and navy, the colonies and the diplomatic service. Could he fail to exhibit eloquent reasons to a few *generous* and *confiding* peers, raised by education and travel above *local prejudice*, and feeling a chivalrous desire to maintain the power and dignity of the *empire*, regardless of any trifling loss or inconvenience to one of the subordinate portions of it;—could he fail to exhibit eloquent reasons to them, for flinging aside distinctions of country for the moment, and joining with the majority in the other section of the legislature, and the great majority of the people out of doors, to preserve the greatness and prosperity of—*England*?

But this is, perhaps, not the whole danger of English ascendancy. However the members to constitute the imperial house of peers may be selected, I presume the nomination to the peerage of *each* of the three countries, will be by the advice of the imperial minister. He would seem to be the natural person to be consulted; and if this were the case,—if the whole body from which were to be elected the imperial representative peerage, should, in the first instance, be of his choice, how easy would it be for him to ensure the latter, to be such as he could manage? Let it be remembered, that he could do this with great apparent fairness in their nomination: for he would only have to secure a *small majority* in the *elective body*, (i. e. the general peerage of each country) in favor of his views, to obtain in the *elected body* (i. e. the representative imperial peers,) an *unanimous* approval of them.

The prerogative of the crown, as to war and peace, would, we may easily suppose, be exercised by the minister, for the advantage of that country which sustained him in office, viz. England, without a reference to the interests of the other kingdoms.

The imperial offices under the crown—the most lucrative and important, by far—would naturally, for the same reason, be filled altogether by Englishmen, with the exception of the few which might be necessary to shew the *complaisant* portion of the Scotch and Irish peers *that their services were duly appreciated*.

So much for the advantages to Ireland from a Federal Union, whether as to imperial legislation, or imperial appointments. Now, as to its effects on her local legislation.

It is monstrous to suppose that this must not be vitally affected by

the other. If the powers of the imperial congress, as to navigation acts, laws relating to the colonies, import and export duties, &c. should be used adversely to Ireland—if the right of making war and peace, the stationing of the army and navy, &c., should be similarly exercised, her local legislature could do next to nothing for her benefit.

If one man were to propose a partnership with another, and were to say, “Sir, you shall be permitted to take the entire care of your own *health* and *comfort*, but you are not to purchase any food or clothing—to provide yourself with any sort of medicine—to strike any body that insults, or injures you, or do any *external* act of any description, without the consent of a third person, who is a particular friend of mine, and greatly under my influence, but does not care one jot for you,” what would be thought of the advantages derivable from the contract by the latter? Yet, this seems to me the precise position in which Ireland would be placed, with full powers of *internal* legislation in her own hands, and full powers of *external* legislation in those of England, as I think, I have shewn they would be under the Federal system.

In order not to embarrass the argument unnecessarily, and to give the Federalists every advantage in it, I have hitherto avoided considering the effect of Federalism, as regards two very important subjects, viz. the church question, and the absentee system.

If the church question were handed over to imperial legislation, the Roman Catholics of Ireland would, after what has been shewn, feel no security of fairness being dealt to them; if it were left wholly to the local parliament, the fears of a Catholic ascendancy on the minds of the Protestants, would not be dissipated; a great difficulty, therefore, would, it seems to me, exist respecting it.

The absentee system, however, presents a far more serious aspect. I see no chance of its being got rid of, under the Federal plan. One argument which I used in speaking of it in the present state of the connexion, I think would apply almost as strongly to the case of a Federal Union, viz. that free access of all the subjects of a state to the seat of legislature, should, at all times, be permitted and secured. Now, as the place of meeting of the imperial congress, would, under the Federal system, be the seat of legislature for all three kingdoms, as regarded many of their most important interests, this principle, if just, would prevent any plan, whether an absentee tax or otherwise, which would interfere with access to it. Again; the imperial minister, resident in London, being the person through whom all the great offices under the crown should be disposed of, to prevent the access of Irishmen to him, would be, in fact, to shut



them out from all hope of lucrative and honorable employment in such offices, and, therefore, be manifestly unfair and wrongful.

The Irish peer, moreover, would have a greater inducement to reside in London, in the case contemplated, than now, for he would then occupy a social and political rank there, equally high with that of the British peer.

An absentee tax would, besides, be disrelished by the imperial minister (as injurious to English interests,) and we are not to fancy, that he would be without influence in the Irish local legislature, with the vast amount of patronage before stated at his disposal; neither can it be thought, that the members of that legislature, would impose such a tax, and thereby exclude their own friends and relations from the vicinity of ministerial, and royal favor.

Any one considering all these matters, will, I think, discover that there would be little chance of an improvement in the state of Ireland, as respects absenteeism, under a Federal Union.

A Federal Union, then, I am decidedly opposed to. I have sketched what I sincerely believe to be a form of one, the most favourable to Ireland that could be devised, and am satisfied that it would secure to her neither happiness, dignity, nor freedom. For many of the Federal party in Ireland, I have unfeigned respect. There are, it is true, some among them who, knowing full well that the Federal system will not, and cannot give independence and power to Ireland, advocate it, notwithstanding, through a belief, that she is unable by *any* means to secure these blessings, and only seek by means of it to secure her a *dignified-looking dependence*. I cannot help feeling some degree of contempt for such men. But there are others who espouse Federal principles, with more manly and honorable motives, who believe, that while they would give to their country equal control over her internal concerns, with that which she would have under an independent parliament, they would, moreover, secure to her a fair share of the power and glory of the British empire. If Federalism could really achieve the latter, I believe the gain would be but slight. In what does the glory of the British empire consist? In the possession of a territory, great, indeed, but gained chiefly by the ruthless and unprincipled spoliation of unoffending strangers, or still oftener, of confiding friends. What, again, is her power? Little more than the ability to hold that great territory, under her control, at an exorbitant cost, wholly disproportioned to its value, in either a commercial or a military point of view. In a work very recently published, it is estimated, that between the direct outlay for protection, and the heavy loss incurred by the obligation to buy their dear produce,



the colonies cost the mother-country, in ordinary times, between five and six millions annually; and to counterbalance this, the only advantage suggested, as derived by the latter, is the possession of a territory, to which her surplus population can emigrate. I can see no great temptations in such glory, and such power, to sacrifice for them the true prosperity and honor of my native land; and I feel certain, that those of the Federalist party, who have been withheld from looking for a distinct nationality for Ireland, by the hope of securing for her a share in them, will soon be amongst its warmest advocates.

The other section of them may be very honest, but they are, I fear, for the most part, among the weak men, who cannot guide, and who can hardly aid in a great movement. Indeed, I am disposed to think, that this latter section of Federalists is not very numerous. There can be no greater mistake than to fancy, that it includes any large section of the Protestants of Ireland. I would be the last person to charge that body with a slavish or cowardly spirit; every page of their history would give that charge the lie. If, then, I find them behind others of their countrymen in advocating the freedom of Ireland, I can only attribute the fact to an honest belief on their part, that they would not be allowed to share that freedom. However mistaken this belief may be, none can blame those who act according to its dictates. One thing, at least, is certain, it neither can, nor ought to be sneered at nor bullied. It must be met by reasoning, and shewn to be unfounded. When it is, I am certain the Protestants of Ireland will be the foremost in the struggle, for the full and unqualified independence of their country.

## CHAPTER IV.

## · BELGIUM AND SCOTLAND.

“ Error is, in its nature, flippant and compendious; it hops with airy and fastidious levity over proofs and arguments, and perches upon assertion, which it calls conclusion.”—*Curran*.

THE necessity for a Repeal of the Union with Great Britain, and the advantages likely to accrue from it to Ireland, have, I think, been sufficiently shewn in what has been already said. Having drawn from the history of Ireland herself, the arguments which go to prove that necessity and those advantages, I might at once reply to any one who sought to controvert them, by facts taken from the history of other countries, by saying, “such facts may be very true, but they prove little. If you can shew an exact similarity of produce, of geographical position, of national character—in fact, a complete resemblance in every particular between the country, whose example you cite, and Ireland, then, indeed, your argument has weight: if not, all it goes to shew is, that the circumstances of the countries being different, like relations to other countries, have produced different effects.” This would be fair and honest reasoning; but I will not now have recourse to it. Instead of doing so, I shall specially consider the cases of the two countries, whose condition is commonly relied upon by anti-repealers, viz. Belgium, which has been triumphantly cited, as shewing the evils of Repeal, (or rather of separation,) and Scotland, which has been with equal self-approval, put forward as a proof of the vast advantages of an Union.

As regards the former country, Mr. Emerson Tennent has published a work, for the express purpose of warning Irishmen against seeking a Repeal of the Union with England, by shewing them the mischiefs which Belgium brought on herself by a separation from Holland. This being the case, it must be admitted, that I can adopt no less partizan mode of treating the question, so far as that country is concerned, than simply reviewing Mr. Tennent's statement; and, without additional testimony, shewing on the facts he has given, how far his work is from proving anything against Repeal, either as it respects Ireland or Belgium herself. This, then, and nothing beyond it I shall do. To begin, I will admit, for

the purpose of the argument, that subsequently to the revolution of Belgium, in 1830, her manufactures exhibited "a great and continuous decline;" and with this admission, I proceed to the examination of Mr. Tennent's work.

"The king of Holland's great ambition," says Mr. Tennent, "was, to render his people a nation of shop-keepers, and develop as thoroughly the manufacturing resources of Belgium, as industry and care had matured the agricultural and commercial riches of Holland. There was no labour, no expense, no care, no experiment, left unemployed to give life and impulse to these grand objects."\* "Under these auspices Belgium attained a height of prosperity, which no human being presumes to question: mines were opened, coal, iron, and all other mineral wealth extensively explored, manufactures and machinery, were multiplied to an extent beyond belief, and the trade of Antwerp outstripped even that of Holland in exporting the produce of Belgium," &c.† "While Belgium thus had advanced in manufacture, her attention to which had originally been forced by the closing up of the Scheldt at the treaty of Munster, which terminated the thirty years' war in 1648,‡ Holland, on the contrary, with her hands fully employed by her shipping and her trade, and possessing no mines of coal or iron, had never the inducement or the temptation to become a manufacturing country; so that nothing could apparently be more happy than the union of one producing nation, all alive with machinery, with its neighbour proportionably rich in shipping, and to open to both an extensive colonial territory, whose population the merchantmen of the one, could supply with the produce of the other."§ "In the midst, however, of this apparently flourishing state of things, Belgium, all whose notions of commercial policy were formed upon the false and narrow basis of France," according to Mr. Tennent, "was perpetually calling for protective duties—bounties and prohibitions, without which,"—let this be attentively marked—"her artizans were sinking under the effects of foreign competition."||

Now, fully agreeing with Mr. Tennent, in his views of the narrow policy of protective duties, bounties, &c., what does this last cited paragraph serve to prove, but that this flourishing state of Belgian manufactures was unnatural and temporary, sustained only by a system, productive of direct loss to the Dutch, and to all those classes of the Belgians themselves, not engaged in manufactures, or in those employments directly dependent on them? Sooner or later

\* Vol. 1. p. 235.

§ Ibid 328.

† Ibid 236-7.

|| Ibid 222.

‡ Ibid 227.



this condition of things must have had an end; and it is most unfair and disingenuous to charge the decay of manufactures in Belgium to the revolution. Mr. Tennent admits, that "to the Dutch every restriction upon free trade, was an absolute interception of gain,"\* and cites "a well-informed author" to shew, that "even supposing *the desire for separation had not arisen in Belgium, the Dutch, ere long, would have been forced to call for this divorce*, in order to save Amsterdam and Rotterdam from ruin." Mr. Tennent, indeed, himself ventures to express an opinion, that "it is more likely that the march of manufacturing prosperity in Belgium, and the increased demand and consumption of her produce, would have ultimately compensated her commercial colleague for all intermediate loss;" but what this "manufacturing prosperity" means, it would be hard to say. The *manufacturers* might, indeed, have been prosperous under this system of "bounties, and protective duties," because the rest of the community *paid them far beyond their value, for such of their commodities, as they consumed at home; and, moreover, gave them large sums of money to enable them to sell their goods at a loss to foreigners*. But Mr. Tennent cannot confound the prosperity, or rather, properly speaking, *wealth* of the manufacturer, arising from such a state of things with "manufacturing prosperity." It is quite clear, that of the latter, there was, in fact, none, but a very delusive semblance of it only.

The great ship-owners of Holland, might, it is true, have gained such profits by the *carrying trade*, that the manufactures of Belgium created for them, as to permit the continuance of the bounty and protective policy, which upheld those manufactures; but the result would very soon be ruin to both countries, from the drain it would require to feed it.

But Mr. Tennent, with much more plausibility, urges the loss which Belgium must, of necessity, have suffered by the separation from Holland, in having the markets of that country and her colonies thenceforward closed to her manufactures. How was it, that she kept possession of these markets, during the union of the kingdoms? By the protective duties in favour of her manufactures, which excluded the competition of other countries. Under a free trade system, she could not have held it. But this system of protective duties, while it may have enriched a class in each country (the manufacturers in Belgium, and the ship-owners in Holland,) was a positive tax on the rest of the community in both, by in-

\* Vol. 1. p. 229.

creasing the cost of all manufactured goods, and must have been abandoned. The Dutch, we have seen, remonstrated strongly against it, and ultimately the Belgians themselves would have murmured at it too, in the same manner that the protecting duties on corn are attacked in England. The revolution, it is true, broke suddenly in on the old state of things, and, of necessity, must have given a great and violent shock to the manufacturing interests; but the effect it produced must, before long, have, in any case, been the same—namely, the narrowing of manufacturing operations in Belgium. If the revolution had not lost to her the Dutch markets, the removal of her protection must have done so soon.

Having said so much on this branch of the subject, I proceed with my examination of Mr. Tennent's "facts." I find the following, at page 42 of his second volume—speaking of Antwerp.

"For some years after the Repeal of the Union, her quays and harbours were literally motionless and empty;" and again, "in the years immediately succeeding the revolution, the shipping trade of Antwerp seemed to undergo an absolute paralysis." Now, how does Mr. Tennent bear out these assertions by the facts which he himself cites. In page 43, he gives us the following table of the number and tonnage of vessels, which entered the port in question, for a period of ten years, viz.: from 1828 to 1839.

Year.	Vessels.	Tonnage.
1829.....	955.....	136,456
1830.....	1,028.....	160,658
1831.....	398.....	53,303
1832.....	1,254.....	150,294
1833.....	1,104.....	129,607
1834.....	1,064.....	141,465
1835.....	1,089.....	153,243
1836.....	1,245.....	176,079
1837.....	1,426.....	225,030
1838.....	1,538.....	257,048 *

"A superficial glance at these returns," observes Mr. Tennent, "would lead to a *belief, that trade had more than recovered itself*," and, seeing that they shew the tonnage of vessels entering Antwerp, to have been very nearly double in 1838, what it had been in 1829, the year before the disastrous revolution, such would certainly be the effect produced by them on any ordinary observer. "But,"

\* The table only gives nine years; but in the text he states the number of ships and tonnage for 1831.

continues Mr. Tennent, "on coming to scrutinize this table, by the test of the relative quantities in cargo and in ballast, the air of prosperity grows fainter, and the real nature of the trade more distinct. It appears by the following table, that of 5,694 which arrived in all the ports of Belgium, in the years 1835, 1836, and 1837, the entire were freighted with cargoes, except 141; whilst of 5,707 which cleared outwards in the same time, no less than 1,833 left Belgium in ballast, in other words, arrived with the produce of other countries, but departed without carrying away any Belgian manufactures in return."

He then inserts this table: "Statement of number and tonnage of vessels, distinguishing Belgian from foreign; and vessels with cargoes, and those in Ballast, which arrived at, and departed from, ports in Belgium, during each year, from 1835 to 1837:

## BELGIUM.

Inwards.	WITH CARGOES.		IN BALLAST.		TOTAL.	
	No.	Tons.	No.	Tons.	No.	Tons.
1835	472	47,409	6	408	478	47,817
1836	493	67,808	5	295	498	68,102
1837	550	71,282	24	2,004	564	73,346
Outwards.						
1835	402	41,522	72	6,529	474	48,551
1836	422	56,665	99	13,436	521	70,101
1837	438	57,355	116	16,303	554	73,650

## FOREIGN.

Inwards.	WITH CARGOES.		WITH BALLAST.		TOTAL.	
	No.	Tons.	No.	Tons.	No.	Tons.
1835	1,316	160,104	48	4,877	1,364	164,981
1836	1,289	160,378	40	4,073	1,329	164,451
1837	1,443	214,739	18	586	1,461	215,585
Outwards.						
1835	916	105,545	457	61,711	1,379	167,256
1836	869	105,224	476	59,863	1,395	165,087
1837	827	131,888	613	84,497	1,440	215,585

Now, in the first place, Mr. Tennent's statement, that "for some years after the Repeal of the Union, the shipping trade of Antwerp seemed to undergo an *absolute paralysis*;" and, that "her quays and harbours were literally motionless and empty," seems strangely inconsistent with the table given by him, in the very next page to



that in which they are made; and which, as we have seen, exhibits in every year—save 1831, (when the change that had just taken place, necessarily gave a shock to commerce, and in 1833, when there was a falling short of about 6,000 tons,) an increase on the tonnage and number of vessels entering that very port. With such facts before us, whatever we may think as to the nature of the trade possessed by it, we can hardly conceive the quays of Antwerp, to have been literally “*motionless and empty.*”

Again, the statement of Mr. Tennent, sustained by the second table above cited, is not very pregnant with proof of “the real nature of the trade” of Belgium, during the years to which it refers. It is not the tonnage, but the value and description of a country’s exports and imports which we require to know, in order to judge of its trading prosperity. A manufacturing nation, like Belgium, may not export to one-half the *quantity* in tonnage that she imports, and yet her exports may amount to a much *greater value* than her imports. Thus, suppose her to receive a cargo of 500 tons of raw cotton, and to work it up to the last state of manufacture; would Mr. Tennent contend that, because she did not re-export the entire in its manufactured form, she must, therefore, be a loser by the trade? Surely, if he would not, as he never would dream of doing, he must admit, that no conclusion can be drawn from the fact exhibited by his table, that of the vessels arriving with freights, a large proportion sailed in ballast. To shew the utter fallacy that would follow, from arguing, that if the exports of a country fall short *in tonnage* of her imports, her trade must be a losing one, I will put a case, that the most unreflecting reader must comprehend. Let us suppose, a cargo of iron ore to be imported, for the purpose of manufacture. Now, a ton of this ore, the value of which, as imported, would be about five shillings, converted into bar iron, would be worth one pound, and further manufactured into the following articles, becomes, when formed into

Horse-shoes.....	Worth	£2	10	0
Knives, (table).....	„	36	0	0
Needles.....	„	71	0	0
Penknife blades.....	„	657	0	0
Polished buttons and buckles..	„	897	0	0
Balance springs for watches..	„	50,000	0	0*

From this, it appears, that a single *pound weight* of the last mentioned article exported, would be an *equivalent in value* for

\* Vide Kane’s Ind. Res. of Ireland, 1st ed. p. 112.

*ninety tons* of the raw ore, and, yet, Mr. Tennent's reasoning would go to prove, that a ton of the one commodity imported, should be balanced by an export of a ton of the other. It is, therefore, quite clear, that the table quoted by Mr. Tennent proves nothing, respecting the real nature of Belgian trade, during the years to which it refers; and, that the only results deducible from it, may be quite consistent with a most prosperous and flourishing state of commerce.

But, even if the table in question, had afforded proof, that the trade of Belgium, since 1830, has been a profitless one to her, it gives us no data whatever from which we can learn the relative prosperity of that period, as compared with any period prior to the revolution. Mr. Tennent is altogether silent, as to the proportion of vessels which left the Belgian ports *in ballast, at any time before 1830*—a silence, not a little remarkable. The only means he has given us of comparing the state of commerce before and since the above year, are in the table of the number and tonnage of ships which entered the Scheldt; and, so far as this is of any value, it goes to prove *an immense progression during the latter period*. Indeed, in most instances, Mr. Tennent, though continually writing in such a manner, as to *suggest* a comparison between provincial and independent Belgium, unfavorable in all respects to the latter, is *suspiciously* fond of concealing the facts necessary to enable the reader to make the comparison himself. Thus, he tells us\* that in "1838, all the ports of Belgium possessed but one hundred and eighty-four sail of merchant vessels; whilst, in the same year, Holland had no less than 1400 sail," and this statement he so dove-tails into his text, as to convey to the reader the idea, that the Repeal was the cause of the disproportion. Now, here again, he says nothing of the relative quantities of shipping possessed by the two countries, before the Repeal of the Union, between them: yet, why not do it, if he could prove, by doing so, the case he desired to establish? It is pretty clear that he could not. We have seen, that the possession of shipping, was absolutely interdicted to Belgium, by the closing of the Scheldt, from the year 1648 to 1794; that, during that long interval, nearly 150 years, 'not a single native sail' was admitted to the port of Antwerp; that Holland monopolized the entire shipping-trade of Belgium for the whole period; and that from 1815 to 1830, the two countries had been united under the same crown, an Union, the very happiness of which Mr. Tennent himself says, was to have arisen from the

\* Vol. 2, p. 41,

“fact, that while the one (Belgium) was all alive with machinery, the other was *proportionably rich in shipping* ;” and, that “the colonies of the united kingdom could be supplied by the merchantmen of the one, with the produce of the other.”\* From all this, we may easily conclude, that the disproportion between the shipping of the two countries in 1838, had little connexion with the Repeal of the Union.

In like manner,† Mr. Tennent tells us, “Antwerp had *once* a most extensive manufacture of silk ; in 1797 there were twelve thousand workmen employed in that branch alone. The number is *now* reduced to two hundred.” We are *of course* left to conjecture that the disastrous separation was the cause of this decline, though uninformed of when it began. In the same page we are told that “a most important branch of maritime trade, that of the transit of goods for consumption in the interior of Europe, has been almost entirely drawn from Antwerp by the Dutch, but the government hope to recover it, by means of the railroad from the sea to the Rhine.” This hope, however, if we believe Mr. Tennent, must prove illusory ; first, “because the carriage of goods by railway in England, where it has been most extensively tried, has not as yet answered the expectations of its projectors ;” and secondly, because the Dutch, having “by their recent treaty with Prussia, obtained the free navigation of the Rhine, on the same footing as those vessels which bear the Prussian flag, will be disposed to make sacrifices in their freights, in order to underbid their rivals by land ; the loss in which will be a very trifle compared with that which must ensue, if the Belgians are disposed to play out the same “desperate game with cold iron.” Now, the unprofitableness of railway carriage for goods in England, can hardly be thought very conclusive proof of a like unprofitableness in Belgium, inasmuch, as when Mr. Tennent wrote, the average cost of those railways already completed in the latter country, scarcely exceeded £8,500 a mile, including carriages, and buildings,‡ while in England the average of forty-five lines, for which bills were passed in 1836, and 1837, was upwards of £17,500 a mile *on the estimate*, “which” says Mr. Tennant, “may have fallen,” (as in fact it in almost every instance did fall) “much below the actual outlay subsequently ;” so that the carriage of goods by rail in Belgium, would be greatly under the cost of transporting them in the same manner in England.

The second cause of failure anticipated by Mr. Tennent in the passage above quoted from him, I confess I do not very clearly

\* Vol. 1, p. 228.

† Vol. 2, p. 75.

‡ Ibid. p. 121.



apprehend; namely, that in a competition between the Dutch shipping and the Belgian railway *in which both are supposed to be playing a losing game*, the loss to the former must be a mere trifle compared with that to be sustained by the latter. Surely, this must depend wholly on circumstances. If the railway can compete so successfully with the shipping, as to drive the latter to reduce their freights to losing rates, a proportional reduction of the charge for carriage by it, can place it in no worse position than its rivals; and the "losing game," must be equally losing, whether played with sailcloth or with "cold iron." The advantage on the side of the latter, Mr. Tennent admits "will be manifest as regards the item of time, the journey to Cologne, by the railroad occupying but twenty-four hours for what may require a number of days by the Rhinvaerder (the Dutch sailing vessel)."

In the same volume,\* Mr. Tennent goes into a detail of the position of the cotton trade, and shews a rapid decline in the export of cotton goods since the year 1833, leaving us however, as usual, without any information as to its previous extent. Having already given reasons for the general decline of manufactures in Belgium since 1830, I shall not here resume the subject. Two causes, however, assigned by Mr. Tennent as aiding in the destruction of that now spoken of, namely, an alteration in the cost of raw cotton, and the unusual preference given to woollen fabrics, above those of cotton, in almost every country of Europe,† have, I presume, had no immediate connexion with the revolution.

I do not think that there is one fact of importance set forth by Mr. Tennent, with respect to the decay which he alleges to have resulted to Belgium from the events of 1830, which I have not now fairly cited. How far I may have succeeded in shewing, that his views of the causes of such decay, where it has taken place, are mistaken, or in proving it to be attributable to circumstances independent of the revolution, the reader can judge. One thing, however, which must have had a considerable share in depressing the manufacturing interests in that country, and which Mr. Tennent can hardly lay to the charge of the change in government; but which on the contrary, seems to have been the offspring of the false and mistaken system of protection, to which the Dutch monarch was so much attached, I cannot pass unnoticed; I allude to the vast extent of joint stock speculation, which arose in Belgium between the years 1833, and 1838.‡ During the years mentioned,

\* Vol. 2, p. 91.

† Ibid, p. 93.

‡ Mr. Tennent admits "the mania originated with some similar undertakings, projected by the King of Holland."

it appears that, "one hundred and fifty or sixty companies of this kind actually invested 350,000,000 of francs, or about £15,000,000 in speculations of this kind, for insurances, mines, machine-making, public works, export associations, glass manufactories, sugar refineries, cotton and flax mills, printing, brewing—in short every imaginable undertaking that could be described in Scrip."\*

Previously, even to 1830, Belgium had been labouring under a plethora of production. The forced markets of the Dutch colonies, into which her manufactures found entrance, without any fear of competition, did not give sufficient outlet for the whole of her commodities, and yet, this rage for manufacturing companies broke out, at the very period, when those markets were no longer at her command. The new companies "burst at once into all the pathless wilds of speculation and extravagance," "the results were not slow in developing themselves, one by one they began to strain, break and give way, distrust was every hour growing blacker, when the bank of Belgium, which had been similarly formed in 1835, with a capital of twenty millions of francs, and encouraged the establishment of twenty or thirty other joint-stock speculations, with a capital of fifty millions more, suddenly suspended payment in 1838, and universal dismay and confusion followed." Assuredly the revolution was not the cause of this commercial madness; and equally certain is it, that to it, and not to political changes, are we to attribute much of the industrial depression of Belgium.

I have now done with Mr. Tennent's work, so far as it relates to the manufacturing and trading condition of Belgium, since the revolution. I must however, observe that it is very singular, notwithstanding his reiteration, in nearly every page, of the assertion, that the event has ruined the Belgians, that he should not mention a single circumstance as having come under his own observation, while in the country indicative of the evils under which it suffers. He nowhere tells us, that his eyes have been met by scenes of poverty; that beggars have intruded their wretchedness on his view. The want and penury of the people must be carefully hidden from observation, when a traveller so eager to discover its existence, and so ready to trace it to its source, has not found one instance of it to record in his pages. The only parts of his volumes in which he speaks of the peasantry, represent them as happy, comfortable, and not only decently, but handsomely clad. They must, of a truth, have a graceful mode of wearing their misfortunes; and Mr. Tennent's gaze must be a prying one, to "reach the heart of their mystery," when it wears a guise so deceitful.



Another matter seems also to have escaped Mr. Tennent's notice ; and it is unfortunate for the case he sought to establish, that it should have done so. He has not adduced a single instance of religious intolerance, or of anything which he charges as such, as having been committed by the Belgian priests or people, since the revolution. He has, indeed, dwelt at considerable length, and with a very warning tone on two documents, which he has given in full in the appendix to his volumes, as affording sad proof of the risk which Protestants run, in allowing any controlling power to those of the Roman Catholic faith, and especially the clergy, over their affairs. One of these documents is a memorial addressed to the Congress of Vienna in the year 1814, when Belgium, a country almost exclusively Roman Catholic, was about to be transferred to a Protestant king, whose feelings were universally believed to be very hostile to her religion, and purports to come from the Vicar General of a *single diocese only*, that of Ghent. The other document is a doctrinal decision, (*jugement doctrinale*) of the bishops of Ghent, Namur and Tournai, on certain oaths prescribed by the Dutch constitution, to be taken by persons in authority. Some of the objections set forth in each document, are certainly sound and reasonable, amongst others that to Art. 192, on the ground that it would enable Protestants to fill offices, in which they would have a direct control over matters specially relating to the ministration of the Roman Catholic Church ; that to Art. 2, to maintain all laws then in force, amongst which were some of a penal nature, respecting religion, and a law authorizing divorce, and marriages within certain degrees of kindred, which laws were contrary to the doctrine of the Roman Catholic church ; and possibly that relating to education. Others were narrow and bigoted, but they were at the utmost the acts of only three or four individuals ; and it cannot avail Mr. Tennent much to cite them, when some of the very subjects therein made grounds of protest, are embodied in the present Belgian constitution, emanating, as it does, from the disastrous revolution of 1830. By that constitution the almost universally Catholic people of Belgium, have cheerfully submitted to the sway of a Protestant sovereign, have established perfect religious equality, have guaranteed the liberty of the press, and have declared education free. Nor do these principles form the mere letter, the *lex scripta* of the constitution, they have been faithfully and honorably acted on, Protestants are not only *admissible*, but *admitted* to the offices of state, and the legislature, moreover, voted a sum of money for the erection of a Protestant church in Brussels ; in the majority on the division on which vote, appeared the names of three



Roman Catholic clergymen. Mr. Tennent takes care to make no mention of this fact, yet with all his readiness to affix the stigma of bigotry on the Roman Catholic clergy and people of Belgium, he has not been able to record one act of religious oppression or intolerance chargeable upon them.

But assuming Belgium to have been in such a position, from the mode in which she was governed, as to be likely to lose, and to have, in fact, lost, in a pecuniary sense by the severance from Holland, what possible analogy is there between her condition, and that of Ireland? Does any one of the circumstances which existed in her case, *making it her interest to maintain her union*, operate with us? Have we a great manufacturing system upheld and encouraged by every means which ingenuity can devise; an extensive market to supply with our productions, which the *dissolution of an existing Union* can lose to us? Is our mineral wealth explored, and made the subject of careful and anxious consideration, as that of Belgium is asserted to have been? To pursue such an inquiry, would be a mockery. In all the disadvantages sustained by Belgium from her Union—deprivation of state employments, honours, and emoluments, arrogant foreign dictation, &c., we resemble her fully, and suffer, moreover, a thousand ills, which she never knew; but we do not enjoy any of the benefits which were hers: on the contrary, every interest which, in her case, was upheld and promoted, is, in ours, trampled on and crushed.

I think, this analysis of Mr. Tennent's *reasoning*, taking his *facts* for granted, will satisfy the reader, that he has made no case against the Belgian revolution, even as regards Belgium herself; while it will equally convince him, that the position of Belgium was so different from that of Ireland, as to make it impossible to apply arguments respecting the one, with any fairness to the other. In one case, indeed, they may be so applied, namely, when they go to shew, that Belgium has *benefited* anything by the revolution. The Union between Great Britain and Ireland having all the evil, unmixed with any of the good of that between Holland and Belgium; in every thing, in which a repeal of the latter served Belgium, a repeal of the former must, *a fortiori*, serve Ireland; but save for this purpose, all analogy between Belgium and Ireland fails. Financially, too, it must be borne in mind, that the revolution, by throwing on Belgium the whole expense of a separate and distinct kingdom, burthened her to an extent which, a mere Repeal of her Union, continuing in friendly relations with Holland under the same crown, would not have done; a fact which

further spoils the comparison, that Mr. Tennent so labours to uphold.\*

I shall say nothing further on the subject of Belgium, but pass at once to the consideration of Scotland, the great rallying ground of the Unionists.

That Scotland has prospered *since* her Union with Great Britain, there can be no doubt. Nearly 140 years have passed over since that event, and her condition to-day, in all likelihood, forms a marked and enviable contrast, with what it had been at the time it took place. This one fact, that in a space of considerably more than a century, she has made great progress, is all the basis which we find in her history, on which to build up an argument favorable to her Union. Compare it for a moment with the broad foundations on which the arguments *against* an Union for Ireland rest, and judge of their comparative solidity and strength. But suppose that they are equally strong and solid in each case, what would be the fair conclusion to arrive at? Surely this, that the circumstances of the two countries, have been such, that an Union was good for the one (Scotland,) and mischievous to the other (Ireland.)

Now, that in many important circumstances the two countries differ greatly, it is easy to shew. In the first place, the tendency to absenteeism, which the Union of each country with England, has increased (by the temptations given to attend the seat of legislature, and the removal of like temptations, previously existing to remain at home,) has always been less strong in Scotland than in Ireland, and for very obvious reasons. In Scotland, the proprietors of the soil were Scotchmen, the descendants of the old chieftains of the country, and bound to it by the ties of birth, and the strong bonds of clanship; in Ireland, it was quite otherwise; the proprietors, for nearly two centuries, have, with hardly an exception, been of the English race; nay, many of the largest among them, men whose chief possessions lay in England, to which they were attached by the ties of birth and property, and who felt no interest in Ireland, which, perhaps, they had never seen, except in the receipt of their rental. A local parliament, which by the imposition of an absentee tax, would compel such men, either to live on their estates, or to part with them to others who would; or if they should do neither, to contribute a large portion of the state expenses, was therefore less necessary for Scotland, than for Ireland. The Unions,

\* Mr. Tennent continually used the words *Renewal* of the Union, with reference to the Belgian revolution; his object is obvious. In commenting on him, I have sometimes done the same, but the distinction is, of course, plain to every one.

therefore, in this respect, have not operated, by any means, equally on the two countries.

Scotland, too, was dealt with very differently in her Union from Ireland in hers. The object of the former was, in truth, simply what it professed to be, to strengthen the British dominions. England did not seek to rob her, because, as Dr. Johnson has very bluntly observed, "she had nothing to be robbed of." With Ireland it was otherwise; the English political writers, for nearly half a century before the Union with her, had been all calling attention to the fact that she had something to be robbed of, and that the robbery could be effected by an Union, and for that very purpose the Union was forced upon her.

Indeed, the conduct of England towards Scotland, in some instances, seems to have been the result of a pretty deep policy. Except on the question of the malt tax, England seems, on the whole to have treated her fairly; and wherever she treats any country with fairness, it gives good ground for suspicion. She has suffered Scotland to grow rich, and has not yet robbed her; she has allowed a pretty fair share of the imperial patronage to fall to Scotchmen; and she has shewn encouragement to, at least, her linen manufacture.

All this is strange. It requires solution. Perhaps, some clue to it may be found in the general system of her policy: may she not have thought it desirable to keep Scotland contented, as a balance to Irish discontent? The hostility of both countries might have thrown too much business on her hands; and finding she could only plunder and oppress one, she may have selected Ireland as the victim. She had *less* to fear from the *discontent* of Ireland, than from that of Scotland; because internal division made Ireland weak, while Scotland, having a compact and united people, would have risen, as one man, against oppression. On the other hand, she had far *more* to fear from the *prosperity* of Ireland, than from that of Scotland, because prosperity would have given her internal union, and consequent strength; and in that case, with her fine geographical position, noble harbours, soil, climate, large population, and other advantages, she might become a *dangerous* rival, competing with England herself in resources, and in power; while Scotland, with her small and barren territory, ungenial climate, and inferior population, could create no uneasiness to her in this respect. These considerations may possibly suggest some notion of the causes, which have made the same experiment (apparently) be followed by such opposite results in the two countries.

I have, all this time, been supposing the Union to have been, in



some degree, the cause of the prosperity of Scotland, but of this there is no proof whatever. No symptoms of that prosperity at all shewed themselves, for nearly half a century after it was carried into effect, which is, in itself, a very singular fact. Nor is there any ground for believing, that had Scotland kept her own parliament, she would not be better off under it, than she is now. Nearly all her best writers have been of opinion, that she was injured by the Union.

It must likewise be borne in mind, that the prosperity of Ireland, under her independent parliament, was very far beyond that of Scotland during the eighteen years of its continuance. That prosperity, too, followed at once, and, as if by magic, the constitution of '82, the connexion between them, of cause and effect, being too sudden and too plain for denial, and it ceased almost as suddenly after the disastrous measure of 1801.

Having given as much space to the consideration of Scotland and Belgium, as I think necessary, I shall only add one word as to the effects of independence on another country, Norway. This country, on the 17th May, 1819, obtained the ratification from Sweden of her distinct legislative rights; but in 1821, an attempt was made, on the part of Sweden, to induce her to accept *an Union*, thus taking away her constitution. Let us see how the attempt was relished by her inhabitants.

"The Norwegian people," says Mr. Laing, "did not at all enter into the views of the Swedish ministry. They were beginning to flourish under the wise administration of their storthings. They were paying off their national debt, diminishing their taxes, controlling the expenditure of their own revenue, *and applying it only to objects within their own country*. Trade, agriculture, fisheries, mines, and the national bank of Norway, were all prospering, and the nation was happy and enthusiastically fond of its constitution. This was not a period to talk of amalgamation with a country, notoriously in a bankrupt state, its currency depreciated, its legislation in the hands of a privileged order of needy and dissipated nobility—of time-serving clergy. Sweden is still under its ancient regime, while Norway is practically in advance of the age—in the enjoyment of institutions favourable to political liberty."

Such a state of things offers, certainly, as strong evidence in favour of nationality, as Scotland can exhibit on behalf of Union.

While speaking of Norway, I should mention, that "the Norwegians use a distinct commercial flag; *but daily regret that they have no separate commercial relations, and diplomatic representatives abroad*. The inferior place which their national devices, as

the flag, the arms, and the style occupy in all situations, in which the junction of the kingdom with Sweden bring them together, is a subject of constant annoyance.”\*

These observations, I think, corroborate what I have said, as to the necessity of giving Ireland, in all particulars, as distinct a nationality as possible.

I have now drawn to a close my argument for Repeal, and, I think, the time is at hand, when Irishmen, of all creeds and classes, will join in demanding it. The Union has, unfortunately, done much to sever Protestants and Roman Catholics, and to array them hostilely to each other. The increasing power of the latter, and their eligibility to fill offices, once belonging exclusively to the former, had it been accompanied, as with an independent home legislation it would have been, by increased wealth and prosperity, would have raised no jealousies between them. But in a poor and uncommercial country, state patronage and places of every kind, become objects of value to all. Trade manufactures and other profitable employments having ceased to exist, men eagerly sought for the emoluments of the most petty offices. Hence, arose contentions, which soon embittered the feelings of those professing the two creeds against each other. The Protestants grew Anti-Catholic, not from religious zeal, but from fear of losing those offices in state and church, which were almost the only things left in the country to ensure a respectable means of support, the Roman Catholics became equally greedy of obtaining them; and what was a mere contest for gain, was soon converted into a religious warfare. Let us hope that this warfare is drawing to a close; that Irishmen have begun to perceive, that all their country's degradation, and their own calamities have their origin in foreign rule, and that they will quickly join to obtain the only remedy for them—self legislation. For my part, I shudder to contemplate the horrors which must ensue, if they do not. But satisfied that they will, and convinced that if they do, no power can thwart their efforts, I look forward with confidence and delight to a future, which will behold Ireland united, peaceful, happy, and independent.

\* Laing's Norway, p. 197.

## APPENDIX.

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### MILITARY RESOURCES OF IRELAND.

As the observations in chapter I. on the Military Strength of Ireland, may not have much weight, coming from a civilian, I think it right to give a few extracts from Military Writers, in corroboration of them. In doing this, I shall not go into any minute detail; but shall confine myself to the illustration, in a general way of the correctness of the positions laid down. Dufour, in his "*Cours de Tactique*," (one of the best books extant on any subject,) thus speaks of the defence of a country by the *inhabitants*, when "animated by a spirit of independence:" "when they have armed themselves, to make their territory respected and to preserve their liberty, their most precious treasure, they wage a terrible war against the invader. It is wholly devoid of method and defies science: daily skirmishes, actions of detail, marches, countermarches, precipitous retreats; *never great battles*. To-day they resist in front, and forced to yield, they appear to-morrow on the rear of the enemy. At one time they occupy the hills and summits of the mountains; at another, they descend to precipitate themselves on detached corps, which they envelope or disperse. *In these actions of detail, he who knows the country best has an immense advantage; one may almost say that the defenders must sooner or later be victorious*. The successes of the enemy can have poor fruits in a country where the defenders have so many means of escaping him; of rallying to re-appear as strong as before. On the other hand, *if he be defeated, his position is dreadful*; it is with the greatest difficulty he can re-assemble his broken troops; surrounded on all sides he must cut a passage for himself through woods and defiles; the soldiers that he leaves behind or that stray from him, fall under the blows of the exasperated inhabitants, or perish of want in the sterile regions where niggard nature has displayed rocks alone. It is in this kind of war that activity, resolution, boldness, a genius for invention and *ruse*, are especially required. A chief who possesses these qualities, and has by means of them acquired the confidence of his soldiers, can with a handful of men, keep head against numerous armies, nay, even defeat them or destroy them in detail."

The work from which this extract is taken, refers more especially to the defence of Switzerland, a country full of ravines and mountains; there is not a word of it, however, which is not applicable to Ireland. The fact is, that small, but perpetually recurring obstacles, embarrass the movements of a regular army, even more than great, but less numerous difficulties.

The observation made in the text, (p. 5.) on the efficacy of the fences, hedges, &c., of Ireland, for defensive purposes, hardly requires a comment. I may just mention, that one foot in thickness of compressed earth is (on the average,) musket-proof, or six inches of timber. Eight feet of earth is proof against ordinary field artillery. Of the obstacles presented by the fences, hedges, &c., to cavalry movements, no man acquainted with hunting can have a doubt, when he learns that eighteen, and twenty stone are about the average weights ridden by the light and heavy cavalry troops in the British Service. Those who desire to satisfy themselves further on these points, had better consult "*Jebb on the Attack and Defence of Outposts*," a short, pleasant, and very useful manual; and the Count Von Bismark on Cavalry

\* "*Dufour Cours de Tactique*," p. 260, 261. The work is written in French, as are nearly all the best books on the science—but I have translated the passage, that all readers may understand it. Those who wish, can refer to the original.



Tactics, whose work is translated, with excellent notes, by Major North Ludlow Beamish.

I have, in speaking of the facilities which the people possess for arming themselves, (p. 5.) alluded to the pike, as easily procured; but fire-arms have, for a long period, been considered to possess such a superiority over any other sort of weapons, that most readers will look on this fact as unimportant. Col. Mitchell, in his "Thoughts on Tactics," has, however, done much to dispel the absurd dread of musketry, the prevalence of which has nearly banished from military practice, those hand-to-hand encounters, which must ever give victory to the men really superior in personal prowess and courage, over their antagonists. He has shewn, in a masterly manner, the advantage possessed by brave and active men, armed with the lance and sword, over those who are forced to rely on the heavy musket, and its clumsy ally, the fixed bayonet, in a really serious action. In fact, nothing can be plainer than the position he seeks to establish, viz.: that the boasted value of the latter, consists in nothing but the *moral dread* of the effects of the musketry fire, produced by gross ignorance of what those effects really are. As an instance of its real inefficacy, he gives the following amongst a number of illustrations:—

"The French, whose arming and training is pretty nearly upon a par with our own, expended, by official returns, 3,000,000 of ball cartridges, during the operations before Algiers. They estimated the number of Moors, killed and wounded, at 10,000; so that, without making any allowance for those who fell by the fire of artillery, *it requires three hundred musket shots to put one enemy hors de combat*, (i. e. out of action.) But we now know that there were not even 5,000 Moors, killed and wounded; many of those who fell, must of course, have fallen by the fire of artillery; *so that it must have taken some six or eight hundred musket shots to bring down a single enemy.*"

In another place, he says:†—"we know very well that, to the utter astonishment of many officers present, entire volleys were fired at Waterloo, and at Fuente-de-Guinaldo, without apparently bringing down a man, however many might have been hit."

The *effective* fire of musketry, we must remember, does not exceed three hundred yards, beyond which, Col. Mitchell says, it is "little better than a waste of gunpowder." Now, men charging on foot, will traverse this space in little more than a minute, during which they can hardly be exposed to more than a single volley, before coming to close quarters. "Tacticians," says the Colonel,‡ "talk, no doubt, about firing four and five shots in a minute. Miserable puerilities, not worth discussing. With ball cartridges, three shots may perhaps be *fired*, but the more there *is of such fire*, the less will be the effect produced." That cavalry should ever have failed to break infantry, armed in the modern fashion, he attributes solely to the mistaken notion entertained by them, of their inability to do so, which has *deterred them from making the attempt*, the fact, he says, being that they hardly ever dashed boldly in upon the bayonets, while he shews that where they have done so, they have swept all before them. "Once for all,"§ he finely says, "in attacking accessible infantry, the cavalry must throw doubts and hesitation aside, the moment that spurs are dashed in charger's flanks; from that instant they must see only victory and honour before them—infamy and defeat behind: they must

'Come as the winds come, when  
Forests are rended;  
Come as the waves come, when  
Navies are stranded.'

And coming thus, where are the means of resistance, that can enable modern infantry to withstand the fury of the shock? Their fire and bayonets?—earth is not

\* "Thoughts on Tactics," p. 140.

† Ibid, p. 103.

‡ Ibid, p. 165.

§ Ibid, p. 109.

deep enough to hide from disgrace the soldier who should shrink from a single volley of miserable musketry, or recoil from feeble and useless bayonets—the bloodless toys of childish tacticians.” Besides his defence of the sword and lance, or pike, and triumphant attack on the musket and bayonet, Col. Mitchell’s book has some valuable suggestions as to improvements in the administration of the army generally, and much just condemnation of the absurd mode of drilling, costume, &c., still in vogue. It is upwards of half a century since Guibert, in his “*Essai Generale de Tactique*,” attacked the latter, and suggested similar changes; but the march of improvement in the army is certainly not in double-quick time.

I believe I have now cited authorities enough to shew that the positions taken by me in my text are tolerably well founded. More than this I wish scrupulously to avoid; less I could not do, with justice to the subject on which I write. If ever these countries shall have the misfortune to try practically the questions here theoretically discussed, it will not be owing to me, or those who hold my opinions.

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## CHAPTER II. p. 66.

“The Insurrection Act was in force from 1800 to 1802: again from 1807 to 1810; again from 1814 to 1818: and again from 1822 to 1824.

“The Habeas Corpus Act suspended from 1800 to 1802; again from 1803 to 1806; and again in 1822.

“Martial Law in force from 1803 to 1805.

“The Arms Act, allowing domiciliary visits, and prohibiting the use of arms, in force since 1807, revived in 1843, with several obnoxious clauses.

“The Peace preservation Act, establishing a regular gend armerie, in force since 1814.

“A suppression of Political Associations Act, passed in 1825; a still more stringent one in 1829, authorising the Lord Lieutenant to prohibit any meeting by proclamation. It was under this the Clontarf meeting was suppressed.

“The Coercion Bill of the Whigs, 1834, which enabled the Lord Lieutenant to place any part of Ireland under Martial Law, and to create Courts Martial for the trial of offenders.”

The Insurrection Acts subjected to transportation for seven years, all persons convicted before the magistrates of the county at a Special Sessions of the Peace, of being idle and disorderly, and all persons were declared idle and disorderly, who were found out of their houses in proclaimed districts, between sunset and sunrise, unless they could shew, to the *satisfaction* of the magistrates, that they were out on lawful business! From the magistrates’ decision there was no Certiorari to the Kings’s Bench, nor an appeal of any kind.

(See, for instance, 3. Geo. IV. c. 1. sect. 7. 14, 15.)

The earlier acts, (during the war,) subjected the offenders to be sent to serve on board the navy.

THE END.

SECOND REPEAL PRIZE ESSAY.

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REASONS

FOR A

REPEAL OF THE LEGISLATIVE UNION

BETWEEN

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

BY ALDERMAN STAUNTON,

EDITOR OF

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# REASONS FOR A REPEAL OF THE LEGISLATIVE UNION BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

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## CHAPTER I.

ANTIQUITY OF THE RIGHT OF SEPARATE LEGISLATION IN IRELAND, AND  
THE VALUE ALWAYS ATTACHED TO IT BY THE IRISH PEOPLE.

AT the Council of Lismore, in 1173, Henry the Second guaranteed to his Irish subjects the liberties enjoyed by the people of England, and, shortly after his departure, transmitted to Ireland a *Modus tenendi parliamentum*. This fact has been disputed by Selden and Pryn, but asserted, confidently, by Lord Coke and others. Molyneux states that Dr. Dopping, bishop of Meath, published the Irish *Modus* with a vindication of its antiquity and authority, and that, while writing "The case of Ireland," he had the "very record before him." Selden and Pryn, themselves, admit that parliaments were held in Ireland very soon after the arrival of Henry the Second.

It has been a matter of controversy, whether the House of Commons was an essential part of the parliament of England before the 49th of Henry the Third, but it appears certain that there was a parliament of citizens and burgesses in Ireland in the 38th of that monarch's reign, and that his queen, during the absence of her husband, petitioned that parliament for men and money to aid Henry in protecting Gascony from an invasion threatened by the king of Castile. Molyneux copies a record on the subject from a work of "the learned Mr. Petyt, keeper of the records in the Tower," and he says, "I have been more particular in transcribing this passage, to show that we have as ancient and express an authority for our present constitution of parliaments in Ireland, as can be shown in England."

There is evidence that the right of separate and independent legislation was appreciated in the earliest times by the Irish. In

the 10th of Edward the Second (1316) several English statutes were adopted by the Irish parliament, and "all other statutes which were of force in England were referred to be examined in the next parliament, and so many as were then allowed and published to stand likewise for laws in this kingdom." And in the 18th of Henry the Fourth (1409) "it was enacted in this kingdom of Ireland, that the statutes made in England should not be of force in Ireland, unless they were allowed and published in this kingdom by parliament." And the like statute "was made again in the 29th of Henry the Sixth" (1451).\*

Poyning's law, in the reign of Henry the Seventh, affords presumptive evidence of an early struggle for legislative independence. It ordained that there should be no parliament held in Ireland until the acts which should be propounded, were first certified in England and approved by the king and his council. It is to be presumed that a similar cause led to the extension of the provisions of that law in the reign of Philip and Mary, when it was enacted that no parliament should be held in Ireland until the chief governor and council had certified to the king and council of England, not only the measures which were in contemplation at the time when the parliament was called, but those also which might become the subject of future deliberation. Whatever means were used to control or influence the Irish, no claim of an absolute right to make laws for Ireland was advanced in ancient times by the parliament of England, and we have, according to Molyneux, "Irish acts of parliament denying this superiority." "It is not to be found in any records of Ireland that any act of parliament, introductive of a new law made in England, since the time of King John, was by the judgment of any court received for law, or put into execution in the realm of Ireland, before the same was confirmed and assented to by the parliament of Ireland." It may, then, be concluded, that the Irish people exercised and valued the right of separate legislation in the most remote times. Molyneux, indeed, assumed that he had been quite triumphant in showing "the several steps by which the English

\* The printed statutes of Ireland contain only about 347 acts, but it appears from the "Transactions of the Archæological Society, of 1843," that there are on the rolls 1263 statutes which are in no collection now accessible to the public. Until apprized of the fact, we could have had no adequate notion of the activity of ancient legislation in Ireland. It appears that the printed acts do not contain the celebrated statute of Kilkenny, passed in 1295, and that until its publication, by the Archæological Society last year, from a manuscript in the Lambeth Library, it was not amongst the printed records of ancient Ireland.



form of government, and the English statute laws were received in Ireland, and that this was wholly by the people's consent in parliament, to which (he adds) we have had a very ancient right, and as full a right as our next neighbours can pretend to challenge.\*

The mischiefs of joint, or united legislation were also very soon felt and recorded. Members of the Irish parliament were summoned to serve in the parliament of England in the time of Edward the First and Edward the Third, and at a later time during the usurpation of Cromwell. In the fiftieth year of the reign of Edward the Third, John Draper, a burgess of Cork, complained that some of the citizens refused to pay the expense of his serving in England, and he was reimbursed. "This sending of representatives out of Ireland to the parliament of England, on some occasions, was found, in process of time, to be very troublesome and inconvenient; and this we may presume was the reason that, afterwards, when times were more settled, we fell again into our old track and regular course of parliaments in our own country; and hereupon it was enacted, that no law made in the parliament of England should be of force in Ireland till it was allowed and published in the parliament of Ireland."†

The answer of the Irish parliament to Edward, when summoned by him to meet in England, affords a remarkable proof of the strong sense of prerogative, and spirit of independence, by which they were, even at that remote period, actuated. "The nobles and commons unanimously, and with one voice declared, that, according to the rights, privileges, liberties, laws, and customs of the land of Ireland, enjoyed from the time of the conquest of said land, they are not bound to send any persons from the land of Ireland to the parliament, or council, of our lord the king, in England, as the writ requires. Notwithstanding, on account of their reverence, and the necessity and present distress of the said land, they have elected

\* The English "Act of Faculties," passed in the 25th Henry the Eighth, declared that the realm of England "hath been, and is yet, free from any subjection to any man's law, but such only as have been devised within this realm for the wealth of the same," &c. An Irish "Act of Faculties" was passed in the 28th of the same reign, and it declares that "the said English act, and every thing and things therein contained, shall be established, affirmed, taken, obeyed, and accepted within this land of Ireland as a good and perfect law, and shall be, within the said land, of the same force, effect, quality, condition, strength, and virtue, to all purposes and intents, as it is within the realm of England; and that all subjects within the said land of Ireland, shall enjoy the profit and commodity thereof in like manner as the king's subjects of the realm of England."

† Molyneux.

representatives to repair to the king, and to treat and consult with him and his council, reserving to themselves the power of yielding and agreeing to any subsidies, at the same time protesting that their compliance is not hereafter to be taken in prejudice to the rights, privileges, laws, and customs, which the Lords and Commons, from the time of the conquest of the land of Ireland, have enjoyed."

An incident which occurred in 1719, drew from the Irish parliament a very spirited declaration of what was felt to be its ancient and inalienable privileges. A litigation existed between Hester Sherlock and Maurice Annesley, relative to lands in Kildare. The Irish court of Exchequer pronounced a judgment in favour of the latter, and it was reversed on an appeal to the Irish House of Lords. Annesley submitted his case to the English House of Lords, and obtained a favourable judgment. The sheriff of Kildare, Alexander Burrowes, was required to put Annesley in possession of the disputed lands, and on his refusal was heavily fined by the Irish court of Exchequer. The matter was brought under the notice of the Irish House of Lords, by a petition from the sheriff, and they resolved, that "Alexander Burrowes, Esq., in not obeying the injunction issued from his majesty's court of Exchequer, in the cause between Annesley and Sherlock, had behaved himself with integrity and courage, and with due respect to the orders and resolutions of the house. That the fines imposed upon him be taken off, and that the barons of the Exchequer, viz., Jeffrey Gilbert, Esq., John Pocklington, Esq., and Sir John St. Leger, had acted in violation of the orders of that house, in diminution of the king's prerogative, as also of the rights and privileges of the kingdom of Ireland, and the parliament thereof." Orders then passed the house, that the barons of the Exchequer should be taken into the custody of the Black Rod, which were accordingly executed. "In vindication of these measures, and the rights of the nation, they afterwards drew up a representation to be presented to his majesty, in which they set forth, that by many ancient records and sundry acts of parliament, it appeared that the kings and principal men of Ireland did, without compulsion, submit to Henry II., as their liege lord, who, at the desire of the Irish, ordained that the laws of England should be of force, and observed, in that kingdom. That by this agreement the Irish obtained the benefit of English law, and many other privileges, particularly that of having a distinct parliament, in which weighty and important matters relating to the kingdom, were to be treated, discussed, and determined. . . . That by this

constitution, and these privileges, his majesty's subjects had been enabled to discharge their duty faithfully to the crown; that, therefore, they insisted upon them, and hoped to have them preserved inviolable. That though the imperial crown of that realm were annexed to that of Great Britain, yet, being a distinct dominion, and no part of the kingdom of England, none could determine with respect to the affairs of it, but such as were authorized by its known laws and customs, or the express consent of the king; that it was an invasion of his majesty's prerogative, and a grievance to his Irish subjects, for any court of judicature to take upon them to declare that he could not, by his authority in parliament, determine all controversies betwixt his subjects in that kingdom; or that when they appealed to his majesty in parliament in Ireland, they did not bring their cause before a competent judicature. . . . That it was the right and happiness of his subjects in that kingdom, as well as of those in Britain, that by their respective constitutions, justice was administered to them without much trouble or expense in the kingdom to which they belong; but if his majesty were deprived of the power of finally determining causes in his court of parliament in Ireland, those who were unable to follow them to Britain, must submit to whatever wrongs they might suffer from the more rich and powerful. That if all judgments made in his majesty's highest court within that kingdom, were subject to be reversed by the Lords in Great Britain, the liberty and property of all his subjects in Ireland must become thereby finally dependant on the British peers, to the great diminution of that dependance, which, by law, they ought always to have on the British crown. That if the interference of the English Lords, in receiving appeals from Ireland, should be recognised and supported, it would take away the power from his majesty of determining causes in his parliament of that country, and confine it entirely to the parliament of Britain. That the writs of summoning the Lords and Commons in both countries being the same, they must, in each kingdom, be possessed of equal powers, or else the peerage of their nation would be little more than an empty title, and the Commons stand for ever deprived of the privilege of impeaching in parliament, which could not possibly be maintained if there were not within the realm a parliamentary judicature. That if the power of judicature could, by a vote of the British Lords, be taken away from the parliament of Ireland, no reason could be given why the same Lords might not, in the same manner, deprive them of the benefit



of their whole constitution. That the Lords of Great Britain had not in themselves any way, either by law or custom, of executing their decrees in Ireland. That this could only be accomplished by an extraordinary exertion of royal power, which would be highly prejudicial to the liberties of the Irish nation. And, in conclusion, they informed his majesty, that to prevent the appellant, Hester Sherlock, from making further application to the Irish parliament, his deputy-receiver had paid her the sum of above eighteen hundred pounds, which, to the prejudice of his majesty's subjects, he expected would be refunded by government. That these proceedings of the English Lords had greatly embarrassed his parliament of Ireland, disgusted the generality of his loyal subjects, and must, of necessity, expose all sheriffs and officers of justice to the greatest hardships by interference of different jurisdictions. They hoped that, all these things being duly considered, his majesty would justify the steps they had taken, for supporting his prerogative, and the just rights and liberties of themselves and their fellow-subjects."

This representation was communicated to the English Lords, but it only produced a declaration, that the barons of the Irish Exchequer had done their duty in the case of Annesley and Sherlock, and were deserving of some mark of the royal favour. An order was speedily made for the introduction of a bill "for the better securing the dependancy of Ireland upon the crown of Britain." It declared that "the House of Lords of Ireland have not, nor of right ought to have, any jurisdiction to judge of, affirm, or reverse any judgment, sentence, or decree given or made in any court within the said kingdom; and that all proceedings before said House of Lords upon any such judgment, sentence, or decree, are, and are hereby declared to be, utterly null and void to all intents and purposes whatsoever."\* It is to be supposed that all the barons received the wished-for mark of royal favour, for Jeffrey Gilbert was promoted in 1722 to the English bench, and was elevated to the English chief baronship in two years after.

A protest against these proceedings of the British parliament, signed by one English nobleman, the Duke of Leeds, is a remarkable document. The following are the most striking passages:—

"IV. Because King Edward the Third, in the 29th year of his reign, ordained, for the quiet and good government of the people of

\* The celebrated 6th of George I.

Ireland, that all cases whatsoever, errors in judgments, records, and process in the courts of Ireland, shall be corrected and amended in the parliament of Ireland.

“VI. Because, pursuant to many concessions made by King Henry the Second, King John, King Edward the Third, and other kings of England, the lords of parliament of Ireland have proceeded to correct and amend errors in judgment and decrees in the courts of Ireland, as appears by several precedents certified over to your lordships, and their judgments never before called in question.

“XI. Because it is the glory of the English laws, and the blessing attending Englishmen, that they have justice administered at their doors, and not to be drawn, as formerly, to Rome by appeals which greatly impoverished the nation.

“XII. The danger of altering, changing, or lessening a constitution (for above five hundred years unshaken, or so much as called in question) in any one thing, the custom and usage of courts being the law of courts, may occasion the destruction of the whole. And since the kings of England, in all matters relating to the revenue, made their grants by letters patent, and not only empowered the parliament of Ireland to hear, correct, reform, and amend them, but also acquiesced in their judgments, it ought not now to be questioned.”

After a lapse of sixty-five years the abrogation of the 6th of George I. was effected by the Irish parliament; and it is somewhat curious that it was regarded a concession, that the British parliament were not called upon to pronounce that act an usurpation. “I have not the least idea,” said Grattan, “that, in repealing the 6th of George I., Great Britain should be bounden to make any declaration that she had formerly usurped a power. No, this would be a foolish caution, a dishonourable condition. The nation that insists upon the humiliation of another, is a foolish nation. Ireland is not a foolish nation.” How entirely the free parliament of Ireland participated in the noble sentiments which animated Grattan, may be inferred from the fact, that Flood’s motion for a bill designed to impose the “humiliation,” was supported by a minority of only six votes.

## CHAPTER II.

DOMESTIC LEGISLATION WAS EVER USEFUL AND IMPORTANT TO IRELAND.

IT is to be assumed, that if the Irish always valued their parliament, it was because they experienced its practical advantages. A remarkable case, in which its importance to the safety and well-being of Ireland was admitted by the English government, occurred upwards of five hundred years ago, and is noticed by Sir John Davis. Parliaments in their modern form were commenced in 1315, when Bruce invaded Ireland. "Assuredly," says Davis, "this common council was then instituted, when Ireland stood most in need of council; for the Scottish nation had overrun the whole realm. England had the same enemy at her back, and the barons' rebellion in her bowels, and so, being distracted in herself, could give neither *consilium* nor *auxilium* to the distressed subjects here; so as they, being left to their own strength and council, did then obtain authority from the state of England to hold this common council of the realm among themselves, for the quenching of that common fire that had almost consumed the whole kingdom."

The religious tyranny of Elizabeth encountered a most vigorous opposition from the Irish parliament; and Sussex, in his consternation, had to resort to a dissolution. It was deemed necessary that he should repair to England, to give the queen, in person, a minute account of the difficulties with which he had to contend. A new parliament was called in the eleventh year of Elizabeth, and continued by several prorogations to the thirteenth. At the elections extraordinary means had been used to procure the return of the known partizans of the government; and there was a violent contest for the speakership, between Stanihurst, recorder of Dublin, the candidate in the interest of the court, and Sir Christopher Barnwall, the favourite of the popular party. "Barnwall, who was esteemed for his political knowledge, insisted that the present House of Commons was illegally constituted. On this ground he opposed the admission of any bill, and was supported by Sir Edmund Butler, and the whole of the landed interest of the kingdom. In proof of the assertion it was alleged, that several were returned members for towns not incorporated; that several sheriffs and magistrates of corporations had



returned themselves ; but, above all, that numbers of Englishmen had been elected and returned as burgesses for towns which they had never seen or known, and consequently could not be considered as residents, as the laws directed. Four days were spent in clamorous altercation ; the discontented members declaring with great violence against receiving any bill, or proceeding with any business. The speaker attended the lord deputy and council, to explain the objections to the constitution of the house. The judges were consulted, and they declared that those returned for towns not incorporated, and the magistrates who had returned themselves, were incapable of sitting in parliament ; but as to the members not resident in the towns for which they were returned, that they were entitled to retain their seats, and that the penalty of returning them should alight on the respective sheriffs ; a decision which still left the government that majority of friends which so much pains had been taken to procure, and which, consequently, increased the violence of the opposite party. Nor did the clamour cease until the judges came to the House of Commons, and there avowed their opinion, when Barnwall and his party reluctantly acquiesced, and reserved themselves for a vigorous contest against the measures of those whom they regarded as an *English faction*.”\*

The writer from whom this narrative is taken, and who was a declared enemy of separate legislation, admits, that though this parliament did things which operated to the prejudice of both kingdoms, it passed, nevertheless, “some plausible and beneficial acts.” He also admits, that “had there not been so formidable an opposition, more acts would have been passed to forward the Reformation,”—words which may be taken to imply, that more enormities would have been perpetrated against liberty, property, and life itself in Ireland.

During the worst times of Strafford’s domination, the “knights, citizens, and burgesses in parliament assembled,” ventured upon a strong remonstrance to the king, setting forth in detail all the wrongs the country suffered under the viceroy’s government.

Shortly after the Revolution, a new parliament was assembled in Ireland. There had been no parliament before for twenty-six years, except that which sat under James the Second. The object of this prolonged suspension of the legislative functions was clearly to

\* Plowden, vol. i. p. 76.

obviate embarrassments incidental to the division of the national booty connected with the "forfeitures."\* At length the necessity of raising supplies to discharge debts contracted during the late war, compelled the executive to assemble the representatives of the people. Money was granted with great reluctance, and so sparingly, that it did not exceed £70,000. The government, in order to exact more ample supplies, originated two money bills in the English parliament, and transmitted them to the Irish House of Commons, hoping to force them through their stages by the influence of the crown. The Irish Commons, however, absolutely rejected one, and, "from the extreme urgency of the case alone, consented to pass the other; not, however, without having entered very pointed resolutions upon their journals in support of their rights." The mortification and disappointment of the viceroy (Sydney) were extreme; and he suddenly prorogued the parliament, after delivering a speech couched in very arrogant terms; but he was shortly forced to retire from the government, and the Irish Commons were left in the undisturbed enjoyment of a victory, which would, in itself, attest the practical advantages of a separate parliament to the people of Ireland.

It was, of course, the intention of Poyning's law, and every similar effort of British legislation previous to 1782, to enslave the parliament of Ireland; but still there were many other instances in which its usefulness to the country was demonstrated. "Notwithstanding," says Wakefield, "the servile state in which the Irish legislature was held, it seems to have preserved its independence in taxation. No British parliament, it appears, ever assumed, or even claimed, the right of imposing taxes on that country; and several instances are recorded in which it manifested its jealousy on this point with a spirit worthy of the national character. In 1690 the Commons of Ireland rejected a money bill because it had not originated in their house. In 1709 a money bill was returned from England with alterations, and on this account it was rejected by the Commons. A similar circumstance took place in 1768; but notwithstanding these exertions of the Irish nation in favour of liberty and independence, their efforts were counteracted, and for the most part frustrated, by the indiscreet influence of the crown; and nothing contributed more to render it effectual, than the duration of their parliament. According

\* It was noticed in one of the speeches of the late Chief-Justice Bushe on the Union, that when the British government resolved to crush the Irish woollen trade, it did not suffer a parliament to assemble in Ireland for five years.

to the early constitution of parliament, both in England and Ireland, these assemblies could be dissolved at the pleasure of the crown ; but when this prerogative was not exercised, they remained until the death of the king. In England, however, in the reign of William the Third, the nation becoming jealous of the power which the crown had acquired over the parliaments, their duration was limited to three years. This period, in the reign of George the First, was extended to seven ; but no change of the same kind had been introduced into Ireland. The parliament then continued to exist, according to the old plan, with the life of the king, till the year 1768, when, in consequence of a bill brought in by Dr. Lucas, the member for Dublin, its duration was restricted to eight years."

In 1729 the Irish parliament effectually resisted an attempt to procure a vote of supplies for twenty-one years. In 1753 a remarkable struggle with the power of the British government took place in the Irish House of Commons. The question was the constitutional one, whether the representatives of the people had the power of voting the application of any part of the unappropriated revenue, without the previous assent of the crown. This was a point mooted since 1749; and at length a great parliamentary contest arose, when a bill proposed by the minister was rejected by a majority of five voices. "Those who were most zealously attached to the liberties of their country, were," says Plowden, "resolved to exert themselves in opposing what they conceived to be a violation of their liberties." When they succeeded, the victory "was celebrated with the most extravagant rejoicings, as a triumph of patriotism over the arts of ministerial corruption ; and, on the other hand, all the servants of the crown who had joined the popular cry on this occasion, were in a little time dismissed from their employments." Again, in 1755, there was a manifestation of an independent spirit on a question of great importance—namely, whether the representative body of the nation should be deprived of access to the throne by any ministerial influence, through which channel the petitions and grievances of the people are made known to the sovereign. Strong resolutions on the increase of the pension list, especially in cases in which persons not resident in the kingdom were concerned, passed the House of Commons unanimously. When the house waited upon the lord lieutenant on the subject, they were informed that "the matter contained in those resolutions was of so high a nature, that he could not suddenly determine whether it would be proper to transmit them to his majesty." The



house re-assembled, and came to the resolution of adjourning all orders not in progress, until the lord lieutenant gave his answer relative to the transmission of the resolutions regarding pensioners. The motion on the subject was carried against the influence of the court by a majority of twenty-one voices, and it produced an immediate intimation, through the chief secretary, that the resolutions should be "forthwith transmitted to his majesty." On the subject of the unappropriated revenue, the following statement was made by Lord Clare, in the debate on the Irish Union, on the 10th of February, 1800:—

"Heads of a bill for the appropriation passed the Commons, without taking notice of the king's previous assent to it. They were rejected by the crown, and the surplus was applied by the royal authority, without the intervention of the parliament. But the Commons took effectual care that the question should not occur a second time, by appropriating every future surplus to their private uses under the specious pretence of local public improvements. Windmills, and watermills, and canals, and bridges, and spinning-jennies, were provided at the public expense; and the parliamentary patrons of these national objects were entrusted with full discretionary power over the moneys granted to complete them."

This is the representation of a man whose object, according to Mr. Grattan, was, "to make the history of Irishmen a calumny on their ancestors, in order to disfranchise their posterity."

"The statement is not history, nor comment, nor fact—it is a garbling of history to establish a conclusion. . . . The question of '53 was the beginning in this country of the constitutional spirit which asserted afterwards the privilege of the Commons, and guarded and husbanded the essential rights of a free constitution. The question was of its very essence, but the effect spread beyond the question, and the ability of the debate instructed the nation, and made her not only tenacious of her rights, but instructed her understanding. There might have been party, there might have been faction, mixing with a great public principle: so it was in the time of the ship money; so it was in the Revolution. In these instances the private motive mixed with the public cause of liberty.\* . . .

\* The lavishness of the expenditure of public money by the Irish parliament had its origin, at any rate, in a good and constitutional motive, and the encroaching and usurping spirit of the government is far more deserving of blame.—*Mr. John O'Connell's Argument for Ireland*, p. 80.

In the time described as a period of plunder, there was a spirit of private jobbing mixed with the spirit of public improvement; but that spirit of public improvement and birth of public ease was there also. . . . In the history of parliament, I observe the learned historian omits her laws—the corn-law, the octennial bill, the tenantry bill. He has not only forgotten our history, but his own; and most impartially contradicts what is written by himself and others.”\*

It would be difficult to conceive how legislation could more wisely or practically be employed, than in that parliament which had the virtue to seek, and the energy to achieve, its long-sought independence. On the 27th of July, 1782, it was prorogued by the Duke of Portland, who, in his speech from the throne, summed up its performances in the following words:—

“In contemplating the services which your unremitting assiduity has rendered to the public, I must indulge myself in the satisfaction of specifying some very important acts, which will most materially strengthen the great constitutional reform you have completed, and which will for ever distinguish the period of this memorable session. You have provided for the impartial and unbiassed administration of justice, by the act for securing the independence of judges. You have adopted one of the most effectual securities of British freedom, by limiting the mutiny act in point of duration. You have secured that most invaluable of all human blessings, the personal liberty of the subject, by passing the *habeas corpus* act. You have cherished and enlarged the wise principles of toleration, and made considerable advances in abolishing those distinctions which have too long impeded the progress of industry, and divided the nation. The diligence and

\* Lord Clare published a pamphlet, in 1798, in which he stated of Ireland, in reference to the interval since 1782, that “no nation of the habitable globe advanced in cultivation, in commerce, in agriculture, in manufactures, with the same rapidity in the same period.” While noticing what this unhappy nobleman had “forgotten,” it may not be irrelevant to mention, that in debating the regency question, in 1789, he exclaimed, in reference to an union—“God forbid he should ever see that day!” In the following passage from the pamphlet (quoted in Grattan’s answer, p. 29), he declares the adequacy of the Irish parliament to all purposes of security and connection:—

“A parliament perfectly distinct from, and independent of the other parliament, forms a system the most critical and complicated; but experience has proved, that in the midst of turbulence, and in the convulsions of rancorous and violent party contests, the Irish parliament, as it is now constituted, is fully competent to all political and beneficial purposes of government; that it is fully competent to protect this, which is the weaker country, against encroachment, and to save the empire from dissolution, by maintaining the constitutional connection of Ireland with the British crown.”

ardour with which you have persevered in the accomplishment of these great objects, must ever bear the most honourable testimony of your zeal and industry in the service of your country, and manifest your knowledge of its true interests."

The opponents of Repeal naturally seek occasions to disparage the Irish parliament; but this character it continued to maintain to the latest times. Its achievements within the space of a very few years were sketched by Lord Clare in terms not intended to be flattering; but which, nevertheless, disclose much of the truth. On the 19th of February, 1798, the Earl of Moira submitted a motion on the state of Ireland, prefaced by a speech in which he recommended "such conciliatory measures as may allay apprehensions and discontent." In the reply of Lord Clare we read the following passages:—

"In 1779 they demanded a free trade, and it was granted to them. In 1782 they were called upon to state the measure of their grievances, and the redress which they demanded; and redress was granted to the full extent of their demands. In 1783 they were dissatisfied with the redress which they had pointed out, and acknowledged to be complete and satisfactory; and it was extended to the terms of their new demand. In 1785 they demanded a commercial treaty with Great Britain, and she made them a fair and liberal offer, which they were pleased to reject with childish folly. In 1789 they demanded a place bill, a pension bill, and a responsibility bill, as necessary to secure the constitution as established in Great Britain and Ireland in 1688, and renewed in Ireland in 1782, which they pledged themselves to support to the last drop of their blood. They had their place bill, and pension bill, and their responsibility bill, and much more than they had ever demanded upon that score; for his majesty was pleased to surrender his hereditary revenue, and to accept a civil establishment for his life, by which parliament was enabled to make a general appropriation of the revenues, and to limit the crown in granting pensions; and his majesty was also pleased to put the office of Lord Treasurer into commission, and by these regulations they obtained the same security for the constitution as established at the Revolution, in 1688, which the people of Great Britain enjoy; and at the time when this security was given to them, the parliament of Great Britain repealed and explained the British navigation laws, by which we were prohibited from exporting the produce of the British colonies and plantations from this country to Great Britain—a boon of all others the most essential to our foreign



trade, for by it we have the certain issue of the British market for any surplus of plantation goods imported into Ireland above our own consumption. About the same period every disability which had affected Irish papists was removed, save a restriction in the use of fire-arms, which extends only to the lowest order of the people; and sober and thinking men might reasonably have hoped that the stock of grievances was exhausted, and that they might have been allowed some short respite from popular ferment. In this expectation, however, we have been deceived."

The review thus taken of what had been effected by the Irish parliament does not extend beyond the period of fourteen years. Is there any parallel for the work performed within a similar interval in the entire annals of the British parliament?

## CHAPTER III.

UNDER DOMESTIC LEGISLATION THE PROGRESS OF THE COUNTRY WAS  
WITHOUT EXAMPLE.

No one disputed, during the two years' debates on the Union, that Ireland made extraordinary progress under the fostering encouragement of her independent parliament. For ages she suffered from a legislative tyranny, for which it would be difficult to find a parallel. This was declared in memorable words during the discussion on the commercial propositions in 1785.

"They would recollect, that from the Revolution to a period within the memory of every man who heard him—indeed, until these very few years—the system had been that of debarring Ireland from the enjoyment and use of her own resources, to make the kingdom completely subservient to the interest and opulence of this country, without suffering her to share in the bounties of nature, in the industry of her citizens, or making them contribute to the general interests and strength of the empire. This system of cruel and abominable restraint had, however, been exploded. It was at once harsh and unjust, and it was impolitic as it was oppressive; for, however necessary it might be to the partial benefit of districts in Britain, it promoted not the real prosperity and strength of the empire. That which had been the system counteracted the kindness of Providence, and suspended the industry and enterprise of man. Ireland was put under such restraint, that she was shut out from every species of commerce. She was restrained from sending the produce of her own soil to foreign markets, and all correspondence with the colonies of Britain was prohibited to her, so that she could not derive their commodities but through the medium of Britain. This was the system which had prevailed; and this was the state of thralldom in which that country had been kept ever since the Revolution. Some relaxation, indeed, of the system took place at an early period of the present century. Somewhat more of the restrictive laws were abated in the reign of George the Second; but it was not until a time nearer to our own day, and, indeed, within the last seven years, that the system had been completely reversed.\*

\* Plowden, vol. ii. p. 116.

The greatest relief from this unexampled oppression was reserved for the era of independence; but there were relaxations before: and it may safely be affirmed, that there was not one which did not give way to the growing energies of the native parliament. "You are called upon," said Mr. Bushe, "to give up your independence; and to whom are you called upon to give it up? To a nation which, for six hundred years, has treated you with uniform oppression and injustice. The Treasury Bench startles at the assertion. *Non meus hic sermo est.* If the Treasury Bench scold me, Mr. Pitt will scold them. It is his assertion in so many words in his speech: 'Ireland,' says he, 'has been always treated with injustice and illiberality.' 'Ireland,' says Junius, 'has been uniformly plundered and oppressed.' This is not the slander of Junius, nor the candour of Pitt; it is history. For centuries the British parliament and nation kept you down, shackled your commerce, and paralyzed your exertions, despised your character, and ridiculed your pretensions to any privileges commercial or constitutional. She has never conceded a point to you which she could avoid, or granted a favour which was not reluctantly distilled.\* They have been all wrung from her like drops of her blood; and you are not in possession of a single blessing, except those which you derive from God, that has not been either purchased or extorted by the virtue of your own parliament from the illiberality of England."

This cruel and tyrannical system "was completely reversed," according to Mr. Pitt, in the seven years preceding 1785. Of the effects he himself was the historian fourteen years afterwards. Addressing the British House of Commons on the Union, 31st January, 1799, he alluded to a statement made by Mr. Foster, in 1785, illustrative of the prosperous condition of Irish commerce.

"But how stands the case now?" asked Mr. Pitt. "The trade at this time is infinitely more advantageous to Ireland. It will be proved from the documents I hold in my hand, as far as relates to the mere interchange of manufactures, that the manufactures exported from Ireland to Great Britain in 1797, very little exceeded one million sterling (the articles of produce amounted to nearly the same sum), whilst Great Britain, on the other hand, imported from Ireland to the amount of more than three millions in the manufacture of linen,

\* An observation of Lucas was, that "whenever a favour is done by England to Ireland, it is thrown to us as you would throw a bone to a dog."



and linen yarn, and between two and three millions in provisions and cattle, besides corn and other articles of produce."

The attestation of Lord Clare as to the progress of Ireland, is already before the reader in a preceding page.\*

Mr. (now Lord) Plunket spoke of Ireland before the Union as a country enjoying unprecedented prosperity:—"Her revenues, her trade, her manufactures thriving beyond the hope or the example of any other country of her extent—within these few years advancing with a rapidity astonishing even to herself—not complaining of deficiency in these respects, but enjoying and acknowledging her prosperity."

In the British parliament Mr. (now Earl) Grey said, that "since the abolition of the heritable jurisdictions, the prosperity of Scotland had been considerable; but certainly not so great as that of Ireland has been within the same period."

Mr. Jebb (afterwards a judge in the court of Queen's Bench) said, in a pamphlet which he published in 1798, that "in the course of fifteen years our agriculture, our commerce, and our manufactures, have swelled to an amount that the most sanguine friends of Ireland would not have dared to prognosticate."

Mr. Foster, in his memorable speech on the 11th of April, 1799, asked, "Has Scotland advanced in prosperity, since the Union, as much as Ireland? Mr. Dundas, her great advocate, states the progress of her linen manufacture, to show her increase in prosperity. It was one million of yards in 1706, and in 1796, twenty-three millions. How does the linen manufacture of Ireland stand the comparison?"

		Yards.		Value.	
Its export was in 1706,	...	530,838	...	£22,750	
"	" 1783,	...	16,039,705	...	£1,069,313
"	" 1796,	...	46,705,319	...	£3,113,687

That is, eighty-eight times greater as to quantity, and one hundred and thirty-seven times greater as to value, in 1796, than in 1700; and thus that manufacture, which is the staple of both kingdoms, and which Mr. Dundas very properly brought forward to rest his arguments on, rose from 1 to 88 in Ireland—in separate and ununited Ireland, under the nurture and protection of Ireland's parliament; while, during the same period, it rose in united Scotland, without a resident parliament, from 1 to 23 only."

Revenue is a sure test in a case of this description. The following table will show its progress in Ireland for forty years before the Union:—

Year.	Gross receipt.	Year.	Gross receipt.
1760 ...	667,311	1796 ...	2,172,467
1790 ...	1,633,292	1797 ...	1,988,818
1792 ...	1,781,698	1798 ...	2,092,352
1793 ...	1,660,530	1799 ...	2,592,573
1794 ...	1,609,127	1800 ...	3,445,718
1795 ...	1,973,181		

It appears from this table, which is partly taken from the Sessional Paper, 452, of the year 1828, and partly from the Sessional Report, 214, of the year 1815, that in ten years before the Union the Irish revenue more than doubled, and that in forty years the increase was more than five-fold. In forty years after the Union there was no considerable augmentation—no augmentation at all, if the ratio of the increase of taxation be considered. In 1800 and 1810, the tea consumption, and the taxation affecting it, were as follow:—

Year.	Consumption.	Taxation.
1800 ...	2,926,166 lbs.	69,824
1810 ...	2,922,568 „	435,307

In tobacco the consumption and taxation were as follow:—

Year.	Consumption.	Taxation.
1805 ...	4,158,794 lbs.	302,316
1825 ...	4,160,049 „	728,288

In sugar the following were the results:—

Year.	Consumption.	Taxation.
1802 ...	329,150 lbs.	394,261
1820 ...	320,733 „	447,617

These amounts are taken from the “Summary Report on the State of the Irish Poor, 1830.”\* The years selected are those in which the consumption has been most equal, and the reader at a glance sees the ratio of the increase of taxation under every head. It is not intended to be implied, that in all other instances the increase has been as great; but that it has been large and general cannot be disputed.

The ratio of the increase of taxation, then, taken into account, the reader will see by the following that there was, in reality, no increase of revenue in forty years subsequent to the Union. The amounts are taken from the Annual Finance Accounts:—

Year.	Taxation.	Year.	Taxation.
1837 ...	4,807,402	1839 ...	4,677,057
1838 ...	4,531,540	1840 ...	4,144,139

\* See Appendix, No. III.

The average of the four years is £4,289,784. If the progress of the ten years preceding the Union had been maintained, it would have been above £8,000,000; considering the amount of the war taxation left unrepealed, it should have been more than £11,000,000.

The exports and imports are another test, but not of equal value, for one description of exports, that of provisions, may indicate merely the low state of a people as consumers. The following amounts are taken from Mr. Wakefield's tables.

Year.	Exports.	Imports.	Year.	Exports.	Imports.
1782	£3,375,692	£2,994,265	1792	£5,321,290	£4,436,943
1783	2,907,922	3,007,236	1793	4,995,406	3,216,405
1784	3,326,211	3,056,394	1794	4,639,301	4,143,296
1785	3,737,068	3,430,628	1795	4,704,732	4,656,608
1786	3,957,843	4,071,794	1796	5,013,283	4,436,943
1787	4,238,333	4,338,012	1797	4,533,693	3,396,880
1788	4,361,664	4,085,149	1798	4,316,592	4,393,015
1789	4,103,339	3,216,405	1799	4,455,339	6,183,457
1790	4,826,360	4,143,296	1800	3,903,841	4,202,126
1791	4,863,423	4,656,608			

The average of the first four years, under the head of exports, was £3,336,000, and of the last, £4,302,000. The average of the imports in the first period was £3,124,000, and in the second, £4,543,000. The increase under both heads was large, though the amount of exports must have been considerably affected by the disturbed state of the country in the four last years. Carrying down the transactions from the year of free trade to 1796, and taking the chief manufacture as a criterion, the results were the following:—

Year.	Yards.	Year.	Yards.
1779	... 18,836,042	1788	... 35,487,691
1780	... 18,746,902	1789	... 29,344,633
1781	... 14,947,265	1790	... 37,322,125
1782	... 24,970,303	1791	... 39,718,706
1783	... 16,039,705	1792	... 45,581,667
1784	... 24,961,898	1793	... 43,312,057
1785	... 26,677,647	1794	... 43,257,764
1786	... 28,168,666	1795	... 42,780,840
1787	... 30,728,728	1796	... 46,705,319

This is more than a two-fold increase; and if we compare it with the state of things after the Union, we will find that in twenty-five years the linen trade was not much beyond its condition in 1796. We are now about to take our figures from the Report of the Com-



mittee of 1830, on the State of the Irish Poor, of which Mr. Spring Rice (now Lord Monteagle) was chairman.

Year.		Yards.	Year.		Yards.
1801	...	37,911,602	1817	...	56,230,575
1805	...	43,683,533	1821	...	49,321,139
1809	...	37,066,399	1825	...	55,114,515
1813	...	39,023,087			

There are no authentic returns later than 1825, as records were discontinued in that year on the occasion of the trade with England having been put on the footing of a coasting traffic. Contrasting the two periods under review, the progress was the following:—

1st period, before the Union	...	...	148 per cent.
2nd period, after the Union	...	...	45 „

In the same compilation the quantities of tea, tobacco, wine, sugar, and coffee, consumed in Ireland from 1784 to 1827, are stated.\* We will divide the years into two periods, and take averages of three years in each.

Increase before the Union.			Increase after the Union.		
Tea,	...	84 per cent.	Tea,	...	24 per cent.
Tobacco,	...	100 „	Tobacco,	...	— „
Wine,	...	74 „	Wine,	...	— „
Sugar,	...	57 „	Sugar,	...	15 „
Coffee,	...	600 „	Coffee,	...	359 „

In the second column there are two blanks; for, instead of an increase in tobacco or wine, we are to note a decrease of fifty-seven per cent. in one, and a still larger decrease in the other. Our business, however, in the present branch of the inquiry, is with the state of things before the Union. We have shown that the most remarkable men of the time described it as one of unexampled prosperity; and the statistics we have adduced, taking the sum of the evidence they supply, can leave no rational doubt that the representations on the subject were perfectly correct.

\* Appendix, No. III.

## CHAPTER IV.

THERE WAS NO COLOURABLE PRETEXT FOR THE ABOLITION OF THE  
LEGISLATIVE CONSTITUTION OF IRELAND.

It is often alleged, that the Irish parliament was complying and servile. In this it will readily be admitted that England had no provocation to seek its annihilation. A period was at length put to the servility and compliance. Free trade was effected, but to what state of things did it succeed? A system, which, according to the words of Pitt, already quoted, so counteracted the kindness of Providence, and suspended the industry and enterprise of man, as to shut out Ireland from every species of commerce. Did the deliverance of the country from this injustice excite an arrogant or capricious spirit in the Irish parliament? That it had such an effect was the insinuation of Lord Clare in his allusion to the "propositions" of 1785, but the charge was utterly groundless. These "propositions" originated with the British government, though the contrary had been most unwarrantably asserted by Lord Clare.\* They consisted of two sets: the first much more favourable to Ireland than the second, but both intended to concede fewer advantages, than might have been anticipated from the high-sounding professions of the minister. They were met, however, in the most cordial and encouraging spirit by Mr. Grattan. "The plan," said he, "is open, fair, and just, and such as the British minister can justify to both nations. He gave to England what she had a right to expect, and perhaps they could not give her more." These words were spoken in reference to the first "propositions," consisting of eleven articles, and professedly intended to open to Ireland large commercial advantages, on the condition, that the Irish revenue should be applicable, when the produce exceeded

\* In a debate in the English House of Commons, in 1787, Mr. Flood, who had then a seat in that house said, in answer to Mr. Grenville:—"The right honourable gentleman had told them that in 1785, Great Britain made a liberal offer to Ireland. This was the first time that it had been owned that the treaty of 1785 was the offer of Great Britain. The right honourable gentleman (he believed) had called the measure the Irish Propositions, and stated them as coming from Ireland. He had now confessed the fact, and acknowledged (more, perhaps, than he meant to admit) that the propositions were English propositions, sent originally from hence to Ireland, then sent back, and ultimately returned from England in a shape widely different from their original appearance."

the sum of £656,000, "to the support of the naval force of the empire, in such manner as the parliament of Ireland should direct."

These "propositions" were considered, amongst mercantile men in England, far too favourable to Ireland. A petition against them was sent from Lancashire, bearing no less than eighty thousand signatures. There were various examinations, petitions, and reports; and at length a new set of "propositions" issued, extending to twenty articles—every change being regarded unfavourable to Ireland. By one alteration, the Irish believed they were required to give up their legislative independence in matters concerning navigation; by another, intended benefits connected with the West India trade were to be restricted; and by a third, Ireland was to be excluded from all trade with the countries "beyond the Cape of Good Hope to the Straits of Magellan." According to Mr. Fox, the original "propositions," after two months' discussion, were "completely and fundamentally altered." It can excite no surprise that they encountered such opposition in the Irish parliament that the minister was compelled to abandon them. "An English gentleman, the secretary of an English lord lieutenant, was the person," as Mr. Fox observed, "who introduced these 'propositions' to the Irish parliament." Mr. Grattan's pithy commentary on the change was—"He (Mr. Orde) was pledged to his eleven propositions. His offer was the propositions; ours, the taxes. He took the latter, but *forgets the former*."

If any error had been committed by the Irish parliament in this case, subsequent events proved their readiness to correct it.

"The construction of the navigation act, which prevented Britain from receiving colonial or foreign goods through Ireland, had been," said Mr. Foster, in his speech of the 11th of April, 1799, "done away, in 1793, by a law introduced by Lord Hobart, to permit the import into Great Britain, from Ireland, of all goods of the growth, produce, or manufacture of the British colonies, or of Asia, Africa, or America. The former construction was the great and constant object of Irish jealousy; and it was a leading measure in the 'propositions' of 1785. In the same year, in order to remove a great and pressing object of British jealousy, which was likewise a great and fundamental article in those propositions, we restrained, by an Irish act, Ireland's acknowledged right to trade within the limits of the English East India Company's charter, and confirmed to the company their monopoly of the whole trade to all the world beyond the Cape



of Good Hope and Straits of Magellan; although, when Mr. Eden, in 1785, talked of the period of the expiration of the company's charter not being very distant, and that there remained no power in Britain to renew it, or any exclusive privilege, he said that the disposition which was already manifested in Ireland to avail themselves of the advantages of the oriental trade, would show that on such an event they would not be induced to resign their pretensions.

"We adopted the navigation act which Great Britain justly boasts to be a main prop of the commercial system on which the naval strength of the empire rests, by making it Irish law, not by reciting its provisions, but taking it *in toto* by its title. We enacted the same laws for registry of shipping, for increase of shipping, for manifests—all great and imperial objects to the trade of the empire. We established the necessary regulation for Greenwich hospital and light-house duties. In short, *there is no one measure of general or imperial concern, or even of colonial trade, unattended to by us*, or left for Irish law to enact a similarity of rule in. I do not call the arrangement of duties on the interchange of native productions or manufactures between the two kingdoms an object of imperial concern; but if I did, I would assert, on the authority of Mr. Pitt, of the parliament of both countries, and of experience, that separate legislatures are perfectly competent to it; and the more so, as more likely to give that stability which mutual content and satisfaction can alone secure. And I would further assert, that *every practicable benefit in that respect which those propositions might have arranged, is actually and practically enjoyed ever since*, and will continue to be so as long as mutual interest and good will shall direct each country. Our object was, to secure the continuance of the intercourse in a sort of *statu quo*, and so it remains. I will not hesitate, then, to say, name to me any matter of general or imperial concern which those propositions would have arranged, and which is not arranged. If you can, I would not fear to say, the same attention will instantly adopt it, and that he is not a good Irishman who knows of any such, and refuses to suggest it. Let the noble lord propose them, and not keep the country in agitation by suspending this ruinous measure over it."

The regency question, of 1789, is often referred to, as showing a necessity for a legislative Union. Mr. Pitt held the doctrine, in the English parliament, that the representatives of the people had a right to appoint any person they chose, regent. If this were allowable,

the Irish parliament might surely be permitted to vote, that the person to be chosen should be the next in succession to the throne.\* This view was taken by the first constitutional authorities in England at the period, and Pitt's object was one notoriously of party advantage and personal ambition. There was really no prerogative which the Irish parliament were more willing to surrender, or which was in itself more unimportant, than that debated on this occasion. Shortly after the Union was formally proposed in the Irish House of Commons, Mr. James Fitzgerald introduced a bill to remove all difficulties on the matter, proposing to enact, that the person who should happen to be regent *de facto* in England, should be regent *de jure* in Ireland. "If," said Mr. George Ponsonby, in the debate of the 5th of February, 1800, "the noble lord (Castlereagh) seriously apprehends any danger on that ground, it is very singular that when a right honourable gentleman brought in a bill for the purpose of enacting that a regent chosen by England should be regent in Ireland, it did not meet with that noble lord's approbation; and the reason is obvious, because it would deprive him of one of his arguments in favour of an Union; but if there really exists such a danger as the noble lord seems to apprehend, it is singular that it has never before occurred to the minister of Ireland, that it has never occurred to the minister of England, in the space of ten years, from the year 1789 to the present period."

Mr. Foster was of opinion, that legislation on the question was needless:—"I say that no real difficulty does exist, for it is clear, notwithstanding what passed in 1789, that the act annexing the crown in Henry the Eighth, extends to the person authorized by Britain to administer regal power, whether king, queen, or regent. At the Revolution the British parliament altered the succession to the crown; and when the event took place, the succession became our sovereign, through their act, under ours, of Henry the Eighth; and so would a regent invested by Britain with regal authority, become ours, without any act on our part. Our law of 1782, concerning the great seal,

\* The controversy in the end was not on the point, whether the heir apparent should be the regent, but what should be his powers. Even Mr. Pitt conceded, that the Prince of Wales should be the regent under certain restrictions, and if events had rendered it necessary, that he should actually take upon himself the duties of the office; and that the two parliaments had continued to disagree on the question of powers; the most important practical difference would have been, that the regent could exercise an authority in the creation of *peerages* in Ireland, from which he would have been interdicted by the capricious restrictions of Mr. Pitt and his English parliament!

puts it out of doubt. Whoever is regent of Britain has that great seal. The functions of the Irish legislature must cease without its use, and therefore the regent of Britain alone can represent the third estate of the Irish legislature. The identity of the person, that the same person shall necessarily be the regent in both kingdoms, is the essential point. The acts of annexation, and 1782, secure this; and if local circumstances require any difference of power, either enabling or disabling, the Irish parliament will be equally competent to establish it under the regent, as it is now to establish any difference, if necessary, under the sovereign: but suppose doubts still continue; nay, go farther and suppose, contrary to all reason, that the present bill cannot remove them; we should be idiots, if we were—for a casualty which may never happen—and for a disagreement which may not attend that casualty, and for the very slight, and trifling, and temporary, and theoretic inconveniences which may be the consequences of such disagreement—to sacrifice our free constitution, degrade the country into the state almost of a colony, and surrender that legislative independence which, in the very act of surrendering, we should show ourselves unworthy of enjoying.”

When the patriots of '82 succeeded in their great work, one of their first acts was, a voluntary grant of twenty thousand seamen to the British fleet. They closed the labours of an ever memorable session by passing a bill for sparing to his majesty, to be drawn out of this kingdom whenever he should think fit, a force not exceeding five thousand men (part of the troops appointed to be kept therein for its defence). The Duke of Portland, in his speech on proroguing the parliament, alluded to these measures in emphatic terms. Addressing himself to the Commons, he said: “When I consider the very active and liberal part you have taken in contributing to these great and glorious events, I must as distinctly express to you his majesty’s sense of the last effusion of your generosity for the defence of the empire, as I must return you his most gracious thanks for the supplies which you so cheerfully voted at the beginning of this session.” His Grace further observed, that “a grateful zeal, and generous ardour, have united this whole kingdom in the most cordial and vigorous exertions which promise, effectually, to frustrate the designs of our common enemy, and to re-establish and secure the glory of the whole empire.” Such acknowledgments had the representatives of the British crown to place on the records of the Irish parliament to the latest times. It has been a charge against the executive government, that it failed in



energy and precaution, if not in a sincere desire, to prevent the fatal outbreak of '98; but that no colour of blame could be attached to the conduct of the Irish parliament, is proved by the terms in which the chief governor referred to their measures at the close of the sessions in the year preceding that unhappy event. On the 3rd of July, 1797, Lord Camden spoke as follows:—

“I am to thank you, in his majesty’s name, for your unanimity in voting the extraordinary supplies which the public exigencies demanded. However unprecedented these supplies have been in extent, and however difficult they may have been rendered from the state of public credit, you have wisely attended to the superior consideration of national safety. Such an exertion is the surest proof that you are truly sensible of the invaluable blessings which we are contending to preserve; and that the best means of effecting an honourable peace, and of restoring all the comforts of tranquillity, are, by displaying at once your determination and your power, and by convincing your enemies of the extent of your resources, as well as of the extent of your courage.

“The powers with which you entrusted me by the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* act, have enabled me to bring to light, and to disconcert, the formidable and secret conspiracy which had been formed for the total overthrow of your establishment, the destruction of property, and the dissolution of government. This conspiracy has been so fully unfolded by your wisdom, that it can no longer spread itself under the insidious pretence, which it had artfully assumed, of improving the constitution. In the measures, whether of vigilance or coercion, which you have recommended for its extinction, I shall not relax.

“Your judicious augmentation of pay to his majesty’s regular and militia forces, which must render their situation so highly comfortable, is at once a seasonable and honourable acknowledgment of their steadiness and loyalty.”

In the hour of real trial the conduct of the Irish parliament was most energetic. Mr. Foster’s account of it is the following:—

“If we advert to the treasons and rebellions which have so degraded this country, there we can apply to fact. Could any parliament, sitting in Great Britain, have developed the secret system of conspiracy, animated the loyal, and supported the executive, with the effect this very parliament did? What would the ridiculous exhibition have been at that time, of a united parliament walking through

St. James's Park with their address? and yet, what vigour and energy did the instant procession of near two hundred members, with the mace, to the castle, give to the loyal ardour of the country? It animated the loyal spirit which crushed the rebellion before a single soldier could arrive from England, notwithstanding the uncommon exertions made there to expedite their sailing. The extraordinary, but wise and necessary measure of proclaiming martial law, required the concurrence of parliament to support the executive. The time would have passed by before that concurrence could have been asked for, and received from London; and it would have given a faint support, coming from strangers, compared with the impression of its springing from Irishmen, all liable to every danger and inconvenience from its operation, and yielding themselves and their properties to its control. Recollect the Volunteers—the saviours of their country, and the terror of its enemies. When their great work was effected, and by the indiscreetness of a few leaders their zeal was misled, and they began to exercise the functions of parliament, we spoke out firmly, they heard our voice with effect, and took our advice in instantly returning to cultivate the blessings of peace. I ask you, would equal firmness in a parliament composed five parts in six of strangers sitting in another country, have had the same effect? You know it would not. Personal character, respect to individuals, opinion of their attachment to our common country—all impressed an awe which was irresistible. But how has tranquillity been preserved in Britain? Don't the secret reports show that France has a sanguine hope of separating Scotland as well as Ireland, though she carries the charm of Union to protect her; that even in England there are conspiracies; and, I will put the question to any man who considers the reports of their parliament and ours, have they probed the conspiracy to the bottom as we have done? Is it a vain supposition, that if Scotland had had its parliament sitting in Edinburgh, the conspiracy which spread so widely, would have been sooner developed, and not shown itself again there, after it had been put down here. Need I go to more instances to show you how tranquillity has been secured, and disturbances prevented, by the interposition of the Irish parliament, which you are called upon, for the sake of preserving tranquillity, to transport out of your kingdom—to treat like the traitors and rebels who plotted to have destroyed your country? I feel it would be waste of time. No, no. Cherish the parliament that was able and willing to save you. All natives of one

country, their stake is in it. Their hearts, as well as their interests, are engaged in its preservation, its prosperity, and its glory."

The Irish parliament imposed upon Ireland the whole expenditure connected in reality, or pretended to have been connected, with the rebellion. This expenditure, considering it with reference to the increase of debt alone, was not less than £17,000,000 or £18,000,000. Ireland, in the sacrifices she made, exceeded even the rate of contribution fixed by Lord Castlereagh; and of this we have an acknowledgment in his speech of February, 1800.

The expense of Great Britain for the year 1799, was ...	£32,700,000
That of Ireland, ... ..	5,429,000
If this expense had been borne in the proportion of	
7½ to 1, Great Britain would have expended ...	33,695,101
Ireland would have expended ... ..	4,492,680
And Ireland would have, consequently, saved ... ..	947,311
Or, £1,020,181 in Irish currency.	

Well, then, might Mr. Foster have asked—"Has the Irish parliament, in peace, or war, or in treaties, since we have any records of its proceedings, clogged the progress of the empire by holding a different opinion from the British; more especially, since the restoration of its independence roused in it the pride, the spirit, and the sense of honour which always attends true liberty? Has it, through peace or war, ever differed from the British, or been less zealous in improving the one, and prosecuting the other? From that period to this day the times have been marked with great and trying events, and will afford us numerous examples of concurrence; none of difference, except you call the regency such. In every one, then, in which Ireland could show its opinion, that opinion has been to support and strengthen Britain, to adopt the same regulations, to confer the same powers. Look to the many regulations in the commercial system—navigation act, manifest act, intercourse with the United States, treaty with France, expiration of the East India charter, and the arrangement of trade there."

How different was the relative position of England and Scotland before the Scotch Union. The two countries were all but at open war. A demise of the crown was expected, which would legally disconnect them in reference to the sovereignty. The Scotch parliament passed a law for the exportation of wool to France, then at war with England. The English parliament, on the other hand, passed a law declaring the Scotch aliens; forbidding arms and ammunition to be exported to Scotland, and prohibiting the import of



Scotch cattle (five-sixths of the entire exports of Scotland), and also the import of its linen and coals, until the Scotch should agree with the English as to the settlement of the succession to the crown. Nay, more, the English admiralty ordered cruizers to seize Scotch ships engaged in the trade with France and Holland, and troops were ordered to be despatched to the Scotch frontiers.

What was Scotland likely to lose by the Union? "Scotland," said Mr. Foster, "had no constitution like England. Her two houses sat together, and the representatives of the people did not hold the purse of the nation. Her king, by his power of creating peers, could at any day overpower the voices of the Commons by numbers, just as the five hundred and fifty-eight British members could overpower our pitiful hundred delegates. Her parliament, even with this imperfect constitution, had not a deliberative power. It could discuss no subject but what was previously prepared by the lords of the articles, somewhat as ours was limited, by Poyning's act, to whatever the Privy Council should think proper to point out. . . . The Scotch had every disadvantage of an unequal and very imperfect connection with a powerful and jealous rival. They had much to gain, and little to lose. Their situation at the time also rendered them susceptible of peculiar benefits; low in manufactures, cramped in trade, they must see happiness in an offer of being incorporated with a nation rich in trade and manufactures. Scotland could not long hesitate to accept a share in all the benefits of a great and increasing commerce, not one atom of which she could otherwise enjoy. Nature, too, seemed to point out to the inhabitants of the same island to cease their mutual jars, and become one people; and if Munster was a distinct kingdom in this island, situated as Scotland was, I should be a strong advocate for Munster's uniting with the rest of the island. But look at our situation—a constituent part of the empire, we enjoy all its various branches of trade, and have a right to, and receive, its protection. Separated, by nature, by the Irish Channel, the two kingdoms have not been subject to the incursions, and deadly hates, and animosities which distracted Scotland and England; we are not only united to the crown, but to the empire, inseparably; our friends and our enemies always the same; and our interests, as well as our laws, binding us in that Union. We have long enjoyed a free constitution. We have it as free and as much calculated for happiness, for security, and for every blessing of society, as any nation upon earth—equally so as England. With this, with every power of trade, with every

port in the universe that is open to England, open likewise to us ; we have nothing to gain, and much to lose. We have to lose that constitution under which we have thriven since its final adjustment in 1782, and which has raised us into manufactures, trade, affluence, and station, amongst the nations of the earth."

There could be no greater disparity than existed between Scotland and England in commerce and wealth. According to Chalmers, the foreign trade of England was to that of Scotland as 36 to 1, the consumption as 28 to 1, the communication as 100 to 1, and the internal trade as 20 to 1. The mean of these proportions is 46 to 1, though the ability of Great Britain to that of Ireland was estimated by Lord Castlereagh as not exceeding  $7\frac{1}{2}$  to 1. Mr. Jebb used these facts in answer to a statement by the under secretary, Cooke. He showed that the exports of Ireland to Great Britain alone, at the unfavourable period of the close of the American war, were three times greater than those of Scotland to the whole world, though Scotland had the advantage of an eighty years' effort to improve her condition, while Ireland, on the contrary, had laboured during all that time under the most harsh and injurious restrictions. Such was the case of Scotland, so often referred to in discussions on this question. It was dissimilar in every respect to that of Ireland. These were all the imperative motives described for a Scotch Union, and it could not possibly have rendered the weaker country more miserable. There was not a ground on which it could be alleged, that there was one reason or inducement of a similar character for an Irish Union.

We cannot have a perfect view of the utter wantonness of the fatal measure under consideration, without another glance at the general character of the proceedings of the Irish parliament in the eighteen years succeeding the declaration of its independence. So far was it from exhibiting factious or revolutionary tendencies, in the court sense of the words, that Grattan had to accuse it, in 1790, of its tardiness in carrying out objects which should be anticipated from a "renewed constitution." It debated absenteeism and an India bill,\* and came to a decision which the court itself would have desired, by rejecting the propositions submitted on both, though Grattan was the person who moved on the India bill. It debated reform of parliament as temperately, and, certainly, as innoxiously to borough-mongering interests, as it was discussed in the British parliament. It debated a

\* The question was, what were the rights of Ireland under the existing law?—not whether a new law should be introduced.

pension bill and a place bill—not as promptly as Grattan would have desired, but it rendered the practical good to the country of reducing the pension list to one-third of its former amount.\* It employed much time in considering the “propositions,” but gave Mr. Pitt’s original policy greater countenance than it received in the British parliament. It debated a Dublin police bill—the freedom of the press—riotous assemblies—tithes—freedom of elections—fiats of judges—a responsibility bill†—a place bill—barren lands—Catholic disabilities—in none of which, as must be confessed, were interests involved to excite particular jealousy in the British mind. There was a treaty of commerce with France, and so little was it made an occasion of dispute with the British parliament, that an address was voted to the king, of which we have the following record in the twenty-fourth volume of the Journals of the Irish House of Commons, p. 177:—

“A motion was made, and the question being put, that an humble address be presented to his majesty, expressing our unfeigned thanks to his majesty for his majesty’s gracious communication of the treaty of navigation and commerce, concluded between his majesty and the most Christian king. That, ever solicitous to increase the sources of mutual prosperity in Great Britain and Ireland, we humbly entreat his majesty to accept our grateful acknowledgments for the present signal instance of royal attention to our common interest in treaties with foreign states, and we retain the firmest confidence of an equal care in his royal breast, on all similar occasions. That we humbly thank his majesty for the provisions made by this treaty, to secure and extend our manufactures upon such a liberal foundation of reciprocity as gives assurance that the treaty will be permanent; and that we trust an habitual intercourse of commercial interests, and good offices, with the kingdom of France, will excite in us a friendly emulation in the industrious arts of peace. That we shall immediately enter upon the consideration of the proper means to give effect to the conditions of the treaty, and to enable his majesty to carry into execution engagements which appear to us to be founded in wisdom and equity, and to afford a beneficial encouragement to the increasing efforts of the nation in manufactures and commerce.

“It was carried in the affirmative.”

\* It was £120,000 a year, which was reduced to 80,000.

† By the responsibility bill no money could be disposed of by the sole order of the king, as was before the case; Irish officers having been appointed to sign every warrant, and all warrants and officers having been rendered liable to the animadversions of parliament.



We could heartily wish that any body of Irishmen had occasion to address the throne, with reference to the last commercial arrangement with France, in similar terms!

There was a point of difference with Spain; but it engaged no attention in Ireland; and, in short, foreign relations, which are supposed to be so prolific in causes of disagreement, interrupted not for one hour the good understanding which it was so desirable to maintain between the two parliaments. Even the French revolution had connected with it no accidents which were capable of provoking a single discussion, or a solitary enunciation of opinion, in which a serious want of concord could be indicated.

During the first excitements of that revolution a new parliament was elected in Ireland, but the old members were generally returned. When this parliament assembled, it voted an address which received an answer from the king "strongly expressive of his satisfaction at their determination to support the honour of his crown, and the common interests of the empire at that important crisis." The Catholic adjustment of 1793, such as it was, had not only the sanction but encouragement of Britain. Every parliamentary act subsequently was as she could desire. Repeated endeavours to effect a reform of parliament had failed; and such was at length the ascendancy of the British minister, that Grattan closed a speech in these words: "We have offered you our measure; you will reject it. We deprecate yours; you will persevere. Having no hopes left to dissuade or persuade, and having discharged our duty, we shall trouble you no more; and after this day shall not attend the House of Commons." Grattan retired, and the fact may be cited to show, that the Irish parliament had lost much of its importance; but it can establish nothing to that end which does not demonstrate, that the British minister was moved by no necessity or just provocation to annihilate the legislative institutions of Ireland, which had existed so long in the veneration of the people, and under which it was, on all hands, admitted, they were in the enjoyment of an unexampled prosperity.

## CHAPTER V.

## MEANS BY WHICH THE UNION WAS EFFECTED.

WE shall take up the authorities on this head as they come to hand.

Mr. Bushe said that—

“The basest corruption and artifice were excited to promote the Union. All the worst passions of the human heart were entered in the service, and all the most depraved ingenuity of the human intellect tortured to devise new contrivances of fraud.”

Lord Castlereagh himself avowed the practice of corruption. He said, “Half a million and more was spent some time since to break on opposition—the same, or a greater sum, may be necessary now.”

Mr. Grattan, in referring to this acknowledgment, said—

“The threat was proceeded on; the peerage, sold; the caitiffs of corruption were everywhere—in the lobby, in the streets, on the steps, and at the door of every parliamentary leader, offering titles to some, office to others, corruption to all.”

Mr. (now Lord) Grey said, in the English House of Commons—

“Twenty-seven counties have petitioned against the measure. The petition from the county of Down is signed by upwards of seventeen thousand respectable, independent men; and all the others are in a similar proportion. Dublin petitioned under the great seal of the city, and each of the corporations in it followed the example. Drogheda petitioned against the Union; and almost every other town in the kingdom in like manner testified its disapprobation. Those in favour of the measure, possessing great influence in the country, obtained a few counter petitions; yet, though the petition from the county of Down was signed by seventeen thousand, the counter petition was signed only by four hundred and fifteen. Though there were seven hundred and seven thousand who had signed petitions against the measure, the total number of those who declared themselves in favour of it, did not exceed three thousand, and many of these only prayed that the measure might be discussed. If the facts I state are true, and I challenge any man to falsify them, could a nation in more direct terms express its disapprobation of a political measure, than Ireland has done of a legislative Union with Great Britain. In fact, the nation is nearly unanimous; and this great majority is composed

not of bigots, fanatics, or Jacobins, but of the most respectable of every class in the community."

Mr. Fox said, he "considered the Union was the most disgraceful transaction in which any country ever was involved."

On Wednesday, the fifth of February, 1800, Sir Laurence Parsons (afterwards Earl of Ross) called the attention of the Irish House of Commons to a subject which, he said, "involved the dignity of parliament, and the safety of the country. The noble lord on the Treasury Bench had, in the last session, declared that this question should never again be revived, unless the people of the country should appear favourable to its introduction. How was the sense of the people to be taken? Was it by legal and constitutional meetings, called expressly for the purpose of considering the measure, and left to their own unbiassed judgment to determine its utility or disadvantage? Was this the means really resorted to? Was this the plan adopted by the noble lord to investigate the public sentiment? No, every artifice that could be suggested was resorted to; influence, threats, and military power were made use of, to procure what the noble lord is pleased to term the unbiassed sense of the country."

The honourable baronet then related the facts connected with the dispersion of a meeting assembled at Birr, after due notice, to petition against a legislative Union. The freeholders, and a number of gentlemen of landed property in the country, were proceeding to deliberate on the measure, when the high sheriff, who had declined to convene the meeting, came into the court-house and told them that if they did not withdraw the military should be employed to disperse them. The meeting continued to take it into consideration, when a gentleman came into the court-house, and informed them that the garrison was turned out, and coming towards the court-house. The meeting had but just come to the resolution to leave the court-house, when, as they went out, they saw the army advancing, with four pieces of cannon, the matches lighted, and Major Rogers at their head. The whole garrison was in motion, and advancing towards the session-house. Major Rogers having been expostulated with for bringing the army down upon the people, and advancing against them with cannon, replied, "That if he had got but one word from the sheriff, he would have knocked the court-house about their ears."

Mr. Grey, on another occasion, said:—

"There are three hundred members in all; and one hundred and twenty-six of these strenuously opposed the measure, among



whom were two-thirds of the county members, the representatives of the city of Dublin, and of almost all the towns which it is proposed shall send members to the imperial parliament; one hundred and sixty-two voted in favour of the Union. Of those, one hundred and sixteen were placemen—some of them were English generals on the staff, without one foot of ground in Ireland, and completely dependent upon government. Let us reflect upon the arts which have been used, since the last session of the Irish parliament, to pack a majority in the House of Commons. All holding offices under government, even the most intimate friends of the minister, who had formerly supported his administration until the present occasion, if they hesitated to vote as directed, were dismissed from office, and stript of all their employments. Even this step was found ineffectual, and other arts were had recourse to, which, though I cannot name in this place, all will easily conjecture. A bill for preserving the purity of parliament was likewise abused, and no less than sixty-three seats were vacated by their holders, having received nominal offices. I will not press this subject further upon the attention of the committee. I defy any man to lay his hand upon his heart and to say, that he believes the parliament of Ireland was sincerely in favour of the measure."

Mr. Plunket said :—

"I will be bold to say, that licentious and impious France, in all the unrestrained excesses to which anarchy and atheism have given birth, has not committed a more insidious act against her enemy, than is now attempted by the professed champion of the cause of civilized Europe, against a friend and ally in the hour of her calamity and distress; at a moment, when our country is filled with British troops; when the loyal men of Ireland are fatigued and exhausted by their efforts to subdue the rebellion—efforts in which they had succeeded before those troops had arrived; whilst the *Habeas Corpus* act is suspended; whilst trials by court-martial are carrying on in many parts of the kingdom; whilst the people are taught to think they have no right to meet or deliberate; and whilst the great body of them are so palsied by their fears, and worn down by their exertions, that even the vital question is scarcely able to rouse them from their lethargy; at a moment when we are distracted by domestic dissensions—dissensions artfully kept alive as the pretext of our present subjugation, and the instrument of our future thralldom."

Mr. O'Connell, in the Dublin corporation discussion on the Repeal of the Union, in February, 1833, said:—

“I, myself, remember a gentleman from Kerry, a barrister, Mr. St. John Mason, who was hunted out of the country because he dared to put an address into a newspaper, calling on the people of Kerry to petition against the Union; who was pursued to Roscrea, and afterwards committed to Kilmainham gaol, where he lay for months, for no offence, but attempting to petition against the Union.

“When the high sheriff of the Queen's County called a meeting of his bailiwick, in the town of Maryborough, to petition against the Union, he was met by Colonel Connor, with two regiments of infantry, and detachments of cavalry and artillery, by whom the meeting was instantly dispersed as the sheriff was about to take the chair. Again, the high sheriff of Tipperary convened a meeting of the nobility, gentry, and freeholders of his county. He took the chair, but he had been hardly ten minutes in the court-house, when it was filled with armed soldiery, who dispersed the meeting at the point of the bayonet. That was the conduct pursued at this eventful period. Corruption, bribery, force, fraud, and terror were used.”

That efforts were employed to deter men from the performance of their duty within the walls of parliament itself, may be inferred from a speech delivered by Mr. Bushe, while the measure was still under discussion in the Irish House of Commons. He said, May 29, 1800:—

“A doubt had been officially declared, whether it were loyal or constitutional to utter a sentiment upon the question of Union after the decision already had in parliament. In spite of this doubt, he wished to offer himself to the house, though, in doing so, he must say, in the words of a great character, nurtured in that assembly, that ‘my friends have left me nothing to add, my adversaries have given me nothing to answer.’ He would only repeat his detestation of this Union; his execration of the means employed to carry it forward, and his dread of the consequences by which it would be followed.”

At an earlier period of the struggle, Mr. Saurin had to defend himself against a charge of Jacobinism founded upon his honest, energetic, but most constitutional opposition to the measure. On the 19th of March, 1800, he said, that

“To the charge of Jacobinism he knew not what it meant, as applied to him, except it was an opposition to the will of the British minister. He remembered when he was armed, and was sworn to defend the constitution against Jacobins; and he, and all the Irish

gentry, co-operating in the same cause, were called loyal men ; but now, that they remain faithful to their principles and to their oaths, and defended the constitution against the minister, they were branded with the appellation of Jacobins. The agitations in this country, and the discussions that took place in the Irish parliament, were made the pretexts for an Union ; but if these arguments were to be admitted, the British parliament could not long survive that of Ireland. If the British minister wished to get rid of the British parliament, he would not fail to draw arguments from the Middlesex election, the riots of 1780, and the late conspiracy which spread over every corner of the island." Unaffected by all attempts to intimidate him and others, he would still contend, that "the measure of the Union, from the means used in, and the season and manner of its passing, to say nothing of its unconstitutional nature, never could stand the test of future experience and time."

In a protest signed by several lords of Ireland, we read as follows :

"10th. Because, when we consider the weakness of this kingdom, at the time the measure was brought forward, and her inability to withstand the destructive designs of the minister, and couple with the act itself the means that have been employed to accomplish it—such as the abuse of the place bill, for the purpose of corrupting the parliament, the appointment of sheriffs to prevent county meetings, the dismissal of the old, steadfast friends of constitutional government for their adherence to the constitution, and the return of persons into parliament who had neither connection nor stake in this country, and were, therefore, selected to decide upon her fate ; when we consider the armed force of the minister, added to his power and practices of corruption—when we couple these things together, we are warranted to say, that the basest means have been used to accomplish this great innovation, and that the measure of Union tends to dishonour the ancient peerage for ever ; to disqualify both houses of parliament, and subjugate the people of Ireland for ever. Such circumstances, we apprehend, will be recollected with abhorrence, and will create jealousy between the two nations, in place of that harmony which for so many centuries has been the cement of their Union."

We are tempted again, by this concluding passage, to make one short quotation more from Mr. Grey.

"Though you should be able," said he, "to carry the measure, yet the people of Ireland will wait for an opportunity of recovering



their rights, which they will say were taken from them by force."

A very remarkable speech on the effects of the Union, as well as the means taken to carry the measure, was delivered on the hustings of Tipperary, by Mr. Bagwell, in the beginning of the year 1819, when he was elected, without opposition, member of parliament for that county:—

"Another subject of high importance remains to be noticed—the legislative Union with Great Britain. When we complain, gentlemen, of the pressure of taxation, we should visit the greater share of the blame on the supporters of the Union. The amount of the debt of Ireland in the year 1800, was from ten to eleven millions; and it is now, I believe, upwards of two hundred millions;\* and Ireland at this time presents a picture of distress unparalleled in the annals of any other country in the world. Though the taxes have been actually quintupled, yet the revenue falls infinitely short of paying even the interest of the debt; and this is the consequence of the improvident bargain made at the time of the Union. This country, in fact, may be truly said to be in a state of positive bankruptcy, and must continue in that deplorable state, should the resources of England not be applied to its assistance. Such are the melancholy consequences of the Union. I have the consolation, however, of reflecting, that I stand acquitted of any participation in that baneful measure, as I opposed it with the utmost force, as did my father and my brother. At that period, gentlemen, some strange things occurred in this county. I have in my possession a written document, signed by the then high sheriff, Francis Hely Hutchinson, importing to declare, that the unanimous feeling of the country was in favour of the Union. [Here a voice in the crowd vociferated, 'No!'] Wait a moment, my honest fellow, you mistake my meaning; but if you listen a little, I shall convince you. Another document has also reached me, for the genuineness of which I can appeal to the worthy gentleman (Arthur Riall, Esq.) who stands near me, and whose signature I believe it bears. [Here Mr. Riall intimated that it was his brother, General Riall, governor of Granada.] This document, gentlemen, is a requisition to which the names of many of the most respectable inhabitants of this town were attached, request-

\* This is an exaggerated estimate, but little was known by public men on the subject when this speech was delivered.

ing the mayor to call a town meeting in order to afford an opportunity to the inhabitants to express their opposition to the measure. Who the then mayor was I do not know; but this I know, that the present mayor would not act as he did, or refuse to convene a meeting of his townsmen. However, in his answer (and such as it is, I believe it was extorted from him) he declined to accede to the wishes of the inhabitants; and the commanding-general on this station, Sir Charles Asgill, availing himself of the extraordinary powers which were then entrusted to him for the suppression of illegal and tumultuary assemblages, actually threatened, in case the inhabitants attempted to assemble, to disperse the meeting by force. Such was the unanimity of public opinion in favour of the Union! At this juncture, my Lord Lismore, much to his credit, evinced a determined opposition to the measure. He called upon my father, and produced a list of the names of gentlemen in this county, who were also decidedly hostile to it, and amongst whom were many of those the most prominent and respectable in rank, property, and character. The present Lord Llandaff, my father, my brother, and myself, accordingly gave the measure our most strenuous opposition."

It may be mentioned as a curious illustration of the way in which history is spoken, as well as written, that on the presentation of a petition, from Drogheda, against the Union, on the 22nd of March, 1830, Mr. (now Sir Robert) Peel stated, that "the sentiments of the people of both countries had been freely and fairly expressed in the formation of the Union between both countries." He was of the same opinion in the great discussion of 1834, for he spoke of the "voluntary compact between two nations which had then lasted four and thirty years."\*

We shall close this chapter with a statement of the army payments in Ireland for five years, ended January, 1801. It will be seen that they increased even after the rebellion was completely suppressed to the last sitting of the Irish parliament. All these payments were, as we have already observed, charged to Ireland exclusively; and they were the principal cause of the accumulation of the debt—com-

\* Mr. Plowden, a warm advocate for the Union, observes, as follows, with reference to the "powers of patronage" employed:—"Many, it is to be feared, in both houses sacrificed their convictions. Twenty-seven new titles were added to the peerage; promotions, grants, concessions, arrangements, promises, were lavished with a profusion never before known in that country. Pity for both sides, that so great and important a political measure should owe any part of its success to other, than the means of temperate reason and persuasion."

paratively small as it was—due by Ireland at the period of the Union.

Year.	Army expenditure.
1797	£2,221,505
1798	2,548,331
1799	3,697,314
1800	3,879,569
1801	4,285,362

The military force was never after so large in Ireland as in the year ended the 5th of January, 1801, which was the time the act of Union became operative. In the year after the expenditure fell to £3,505,338, and in the succeeding year to £2,876,621. It advanced a little in 1804, and considerably in 1805, but it never was so high as in the year ended 5th of January, 1801.\*

\* Report of Session, 1830, No. 667.



## CHAPTER VI.

## THE TERMS OF THE UNION WERE UNFAVOURABLE TO IRELAND.

It is believed that the failure of the "propositions" of 1785, first suggested a legislative Union to Mr. Pitt. Indeed, it has been distinctly alleged by himself, that the introduction of one project was the unavoidable consequence of the rejection of the other. In his speech on the 11th of January, 1799, his words were:—

"I am not now arguing that a legislative Union is the only measure which can possibly be adopted." As to the danger of jealousies, he asked, "How can the evil be remedied?" He answered, "By two means only: either by some compact entered into by the legislatures of the two countries, respecting the mode of forming their commercial regulations, or else by blending the two legislatures together. These," said he, "are the only two means. I defy the wit of man to point out a third." "We have, then," he continued, "the licence and authority of that right honourable gentleman (the allusion was to a speech spoken by Mr. Foster in 1785), stating the advantages that would result from the adoption of those propositions, and that the rejection of them would, in his opinion, lead to a separation between the two countries. The result is, then, that you must remain in the state he has described, with the seeds of separation between the two countries sown, and with the connection upon which their mutual prosperity depends, in danger of being dissolved; or you must make a compact between the two legislatures, a measure which has been tried and found impracticable, or you must have a legislative Union."

In this passage it is assumed, that the measure of 1785 had been found "impracticable." It was so found in that year, but it does not follow that it could not have been carried in 1799. It was beyond question practicable in 1800; and it is of some importance that there is a clear admission in these passages, that it would have rendered a legislative Union unnecessary, in the mind even of William Pitt. Some measures suggested by the propositions were, as has been seen in the statement of Mr. Foster, voluntarily adopted by the Irish parliament, long before the agitation for an Union had commenced;

and the legislation of subsequent times had attested the impolicy of the interdict, as to the intercourse with India, which, in 1785, was so strenuously insisted upon by the mercantile interests of England. The fact is, that if there were two legislatures now in existence, they would readily agree to every really equitable principle contained in those famous propositions. All the objects they were intended to effect for England, have been achieved; and that they have thus succeeded, is no part of the complaint of Ireland at the present moment. Ireland does not complain that there is free trade. Ireland does not complain that she contributes to the general expenditure of the empire. Mr. Pitt's "mode of forming commercial regulations," is in operation. There is, then, no real or substantial ground for those "jealousies" he spoke of; and all his apprehensions regarding them have been proved groundless. Ireland makes not, we repeat, any objection to the appropriation of a portion of her taxes to the support of the navy. The considerations of commerce and taxation having been settled in a way far transcending any expectations entertained either in 1785, or at the Union, it would require some ingenuity to point out what subject there could be a serious difference upon, if there were now two legislatures.\*

\* In the *Quarterly Review* for September, 1842, extracts are taken from a correspondence between Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Rutland, lord lieutenant of Ireland from 1781 to 1787. This correspondence, it appears, was published for the first time in 1842, having been discovered accidentally by the present Duke of Rutland, in examining some family papers. We learn from it, that in 1784, Mr. Pitt thought that the basis of a "permanent connection" between the two countries, was to be found in an arrangement entirely independent of a legislative Union. He not only contemplated the permanent existence of two legislatures, but a reform to be extended to both. The following extracts are remarkable:—

"Parliamentary reform, I am still sure, after considering all you have stated, *must* sooner or later be carried in *both countries*. If it is well done, the sooner, the better. I will write to you, by as early an opportunity as I can, the full result of all my reflections on the subject. For God's sake, do not persuade yourself, in the meantime, that the measure, if properly managed, and separated from every ingredient of faction (which I believe it may be), is inconsistent with either the dignity or the tranquillity and facility of government. On the contrary, I believe *they* ultimately depend upon it. And if such a settlement is practicable, it is the only system worth the hazard and trouble which belongs to every system that can be thought of."

The above is from a letter from Mr. Pitt, dated December 4, 1784. The following passages are from a long and elaborate letter, dated January 6, 1785, in which he unfolds his plan of a "final compact," which was to make England and Ireland one country in effect, though, for local concerns, under distinct legislatures:—

"The general tenor of our propositions not only gives a full equality to Ireland, but extends that principle to many points where it would be easy to have urged just exceptions; and in many other points possibly turns the scale

The Union having been the measure resolved upon, terms were to be proposed. The professions of liberal and even generous intentions, on the part of the English minister, were very specious. The Union was to be founded, according to the speech now alluded to, on "fair, just, and equitable principles, calculated to produce mutual advantages to the two kingdoms." The connection was to be upheld "with a regard to the local interests of Ireland; with a regard to every thing that can give to Ireland its due weight and importance, as a great member of the empire; with a view of giving to that country the means of improving all its great natural resources, and

in her favour, at a risk, perhaps a remote one, of considerable local disadvantages to many great interests of this country. I do not say that in practice I apprehend the effect on our trade and manufactures will be such as it will perhaps be industriously represented; but I am persuaded (whatever may be the event) that, by the additions now proposed to former concessions, we open to Ireland the chance of a competition with ourselves on terms of more than equality, and we give her advantages which make it impossible she should ever have anything to fear from the jealousy or restrictive policy of this country in future. Such an arrangement is defensible only on the idea of relinquishing local prejudices and partial advantages, in order to consult uniformly and without distinction the general benefit of the empire. This cannot be done but by making England and Ireland *one country* in effect, though, for local concerns, under distinct legislatures; *one* in the communication of advantages, and, of course, in the participation of burdens. If their *unity* is broken, or rendered absolutely *precarious*, in either of these points, the system is defective, and there is an end of the whole.

"If a permanent system is to be settled by the authority of two distinct legislatures, I do not know what there is more odious in a bargain between them, than in a treaty between two separate crowns. If the bargain is unfair, if the terms of it are not for mutual benefit, it is not calculated for the situation of two countries connected as Great Britain and Ireland ought to be. But it is of the essence of such a settlement (whatever name is to be given to it) that both the *advantage* and the *obligation* should be reciprocal; one cannot be so without the other. This reciprocity, whether it is or is not to be called a bargain, is an inherent and necessary part of the new system to be established between the two countries. In the relations of Great Britain with Ireland there can subsist but two possible principles of connection: the one, that which is exploded, of total subordination in Ireland, and of restrictions on her commerce for the benefit of this country, which was by this means enabled to bear the whole burden of the empire; the other is, what is now proposed to be confirmed and completed, that of an equal participation of all commercial advantages, and some proportion of the charge of protecting the general interest. If Ireland is at all connected with this country, and to remain a member of the empire, she must make her option between these two principles, and she has wisely and justly made it for the latter. But if she does think this system for her advantage as well as ours, and if she sets any value either on the confirmation and security of what has been given her, or on the possession of what is now within her reach, she can attain neither without performing, on her part, what both reason and justice entitle us to expect.

"The only remaining consideration is, for what service this contribution shall be granted, and in what manner it shall be applied. This seems a question of little difficulty. The great advantage that Ireland will derive is, from the equal participation of our trade, and of the benefits derived from our colonies. Nothing, therefore, is so natural, as that she should contribute to the support of



of giving it a full participation of all those blessings which England enjoyed.\* “If ever a time should come, at which a separation of the interests of the two countries should, unhappily, arrive, it will not take place in consequence of any want of conciliation or kindness on the part of Great Britain.” Ireland was to be taxed with the strict observance of the “due proportion of her ability,” and, moreover, the “due proportion of her own limited expenses;”† and, in fine, she was to be entitled to “the same privileges,” the Union being designed to be founded on “equal and liberal principles; on the similarity of laws, constitution, and government; and on a sense of mutual interests and affections, by promoting the security, wealth, and commerce of the respective kingdoms, and by allaying the distractions which have unhappily prevailed in Ireland.”‡

It is really curious to observe in what a variety of ways professions were made, and allurements held out, to Ireland. In the same speech, which was, according to Mr. Foster, circulated all over Ireland with the imprint of the publisher of the government official Gazette, we have the following passage:—

“The advantages of the linen trade have been stated in Ireland by a respectable authority as an argument against the Union; but I

the navy, on which the protection of both depends. For the rest, it seems only necessary to provide some proper mode of ascertaining to the parliament of Ireland, that the surplus is annually paid over, to be applied together with other moneys voted here for naval services, and to be accounted for, together with them, to the parliament of this country. There can be but *one navy* for the empire at large, and it must be administered by the executive power in this country. The particulars of the administration of it cannot be under the control of anything but the parliament of this country. This principle, on the fullest consideration, seems one which must be held sacred. Nothing else can also prevent the supreme executive power, and with it the force of the empire, being distracted into different channels, and its energy and effect being consequently lost. As the sum to be received in this manner from Ireland can never be more than a part (I fear a small one) of the whole naval expense, as its amount from time to time will be notorious, and as it will go in diminution of the supplies to be granted here, the parliament of this country will have both the means and the inducement to watch its expenditure as narrowly as if it was granted by themselves. Ireland, therefore, will have the same security that we have against any misapplication, and she will have the less reason to be jealous on the subject, because we have a common interest with her, and to a still greater extent, in the service which it is intended to support; and if any deficiency arises from mismanagement, it will (according to this arrangement) fall, not upon them, but upon us, to make it good.”

[The foregoing note has been introduced since this essay was sent to the printer's. The work has been left, in all other respects (with the exception of a few alterations merely verbal, and, a note in a subsequent page referring to the Report of the Land Commissioners), as it was when submitted to the judges at the close of December.]

\* Speech of Mr. Pitt, January 31, 1799.

† Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

must observe that this trade at present rests on the independent discretion and liberality of the parliament of Great Britain ; whereas, were an Union to take place, the trade would, in the first instance, be secured by formal and irrevocable compact, and would, besides, from the identity of interest between the two countries, have a security for its continuance worth a thousand compacts.\*

Nevertheless, the terms of the Union were highly unfavourable to Ireland ; and we would desire, in the first place, to show this by the illustrations of a writer who was an advocate of legislative incorporation, Mr. Newenham, author of "A View of the Natural, Political, and Commercial Circumstances of Ireland."

"First, consistently with the principles of equity, Britain ought to have given some appropriate advantages to Ireland, in compensation for those which the latter unquestionably derived from the locality of her legislature. Secondly, the commercial arrangements between the two countries ought to have been regulated by the consideration, that much of the wealth acquired in Ireland would necessarily flow into Britain, and remain there, while none of that acquired by the latter would finally be fixed in the former. Thirdly, some indemnification ought to have been prepared for Ireland, for the increased pressure of taxes which she was about to experience, in consequence of an addition to the number of her absentees : for it was evident that her public revenue would suffer a diminution proportionate to the private revenue withdrawn ; and, consequently, that the burden of taxes would be augmented on that which remained, and industry be in proportion cramped ; while in Britain, to which this private revenue was destined to flow, the contrary effects were to be expected. Fourthly, two countries, to which equal commercial advantages were intended, but in one of which manufacturing skill, capital, and industry, were raised to an unequalled height, and in the other almost totally wanting, ought certainly not to have been placed on a level in any particular ; but due allowances made to the latter, until it had attained

\* The advantages of the linen trade before the Union were thus described by Mr. Pitt:—"By the bounty we give to Ireland we afford her a double market for this article, and thus ensure to her advantages in competition with other countries in linens of thirty per cent. . . . By this practice we indeed appear either to forego the advantages of the duty arising from the importation of other linens, constituting a revenue of £700,000, or by admitting their linens only to sacrifice in the price of the article collected from the people a million sterling."

There are now no bounties ; there is not even a linen board ; and the advantage which the Irish traders have, is one common to the traders of the empire at large—an import duty affecting foreign linens of fifteen per cent.

to an equality, or nearly to an equality with the former . . . . .

Lastly, the number of representatives allotted to Ireland was by no means proportionably and equitably adjusted to those circumstances which ought to have been resorted to, or which were resorted to, on the subject of representation, by the framers of the act; an omission on which it seems necessary to enlarge, as in the event of its being remedied, the people of Ireland may entertain a much more sanguine expectation than they do now of such an equitable general modification of the act of Union, as may render it a political blessing of superior magnitude. The number of representatives for Ireland ought to have been adjusted to the population and wealth of the country, conjunctively, or rather more to the former than to the latter; inasmuch as national wealth is more likely to be increased under a good government, in proportion to the number of people, than the number of people in proportion to the augmentation of wealth; but to ascertain either the population or wealth of Ireland, or to attain a competent knowledge of them, required a much more minute and comprehensive investigation than appears to have taken place . . . .

The number of representatives to which Ireland appeared entitled by all those returns, [imports, exports, revenue, &c.,] taken on an average, was 108. In allowing her therefore one hundred representatives principles of equity appear to be sufficiently adhered to, but in reality it was far otherwise. For, first, the returns of the hearth-money collectors had always been known to be considerably under the truth. The inspector-general of hearth money gave it as his decided opinion to the writer of these pages, that not more than one-half of the houses exempt from the hearth tax was returned; consequently, the population contained in one hundred and twelve thousand five hundred and fifty-six houses, amounting certainly to upwards of half a million, was overlooked. Besides, no allowance was made for the increase of people from the year 1791 to 1800, which was evidently great. The direct loss occasioned by the rebellion certainly did not exceed twenty thousand souls, even if the number of those who voluntarily quitted their country be added to that of those who were exiled or slain. Moreover, the population of Britain appears to have been taken at eleven millions, though it was not known to amount to that number till after the Union, and was generally supposed to be much less before it. Had the people of Ireland been carefully enumerated, they positively would have been found to exceed four million and a half at least; and consequently Ireland might have claimed, with reference to her



population, at least two hundred and twenty-eight representatives instead of two hundred and two. Secondly, it was unfair to take the exports of a country, among whose exports provisions of different sorts held so conspicuous a place, as in the case of Ireland during a period of three years, when she had to support an army unprecedently great. Had the value of the exports of the native produce and manufacture of Ireland, on an average of three years ended in 1792, and which amounted, according to the official value, to £5,061,913, been taken and compared with those of Britain during the same period, which amounted to £15,173,202, Ireland might, with reference to exports, have claimed a hundred and seventy nine representatives. Thirdly, it was unfair to make the imports of Ireland during three years, whereof one was distinguished by rebellion, and the other two by unequalled alarm, as, under such circumstances, people will certainly not purchase so largely, as during the prevalence of internal peace, and exemption from apprehension. Had the imports of Ireland, during the period ended in 1792, and which amounted to £4,079,906, been compared with those of Britain during the same period, and which amounted to £13,530,532, deducting therefrom the foreign articles afterwards exported, Ireland would have appeared to have a claim on this ground to a hundred and sixty-eight representatives. Fourthly, it was perfectly unjustifiable to resort to the net instead of the gross revenues of both countries; the charges on the revenue of Ireland having been much greater than those on the revenue of Great Britain, and the expenses of collection infinitely more so. The balances, likewise, in the hands of the collectors of the Irish revenue have always been, beyond all comparison, greater in proportion than those in the hands of the collectors of the British revenue. This even at present is the case. . . . . But to the revenue of Ireland, whether gross or net, it was most unfair to resort; the collection of that revenue having been singularly defective, as was well known, and the national debt demanding an increase of revenue, having been trivial in the year ended 25th of March, 1799, in comparison to what it was likely to be, and really was, even in the following year. . . . . But the rentals of the respective countries ought to have been resorted to, as criterions of their wealth, equally with, or rather in preference to, their public revenues, or any other criterion. Had this been the case, the number of representatives, claimable by Ireland, with reference to rental, would have been about one hundred and eighty-six, her rental then having been certainly as

near fifteen millions, as that of Britain was near forty-five. The number of representatives for Ireland then, if fairly proportioned to population and wealth, ought to have been one hundred and fifty at least, instead of one hundred : the number claimable with reference to population being two hundred and twenty-eight ; with reference to exports, one hundred and seventy-nine ; with reference to imports, one hundred and sixty-eight ; with reference to revenue, eighty-five ; and with reference to rental, one hundred and eighty-six ; the average of all of which is one hundred and sixty-nine."

Next we are to consider the contribution to the general expenditure fixed upon for Ireland. Elements of calculation were taken to sustain an inference as to the relative capabilities of the two countries : they were, exports, imports, and the consumption of beer, spirits, sugar, wine, tea, tobacco, and malt. All were liable to such temporary influences as made them a most uncertain and inapplicable test. The consumption of tobacco may be general, and the revenue derivable from it large, though in other articles the case may be entirely different ; and the question was not what Ireland could pay, with reference to the use she made of tobacco, wine, or any such commodity, but what her taxation *on the whole* produced. If we compare the revenue receipts of the two countries, in three years prior to the Union, we shall find that the Irish were about a tenth. But in this interval receipts under certain heads, may, for very obvious reasons, be said to be excessive. They could not *fairly* be taken at the Union as a tenth ; and a great number of years had not passed after the measure was carried, when they proved to be only a twelfth or thirteenth. Lord Castlereagh, however, found little difficulty, with a bribed House of Commons at his back, in deciding that the real proportion was not as one to twelve or thirteen, but one to seven and a half. The following were his observations on the subject :—

"In order to find the sum which Ireland should contribute to the imperial expenses, it would be necessary to seek for a criterion by which to judge of her relative ability. The best criterion, as embracing all kinds of possession and expense, was an income tax. This was not a criterion to be found in Ireland, nor was it likely that for some time our local circumstances could permit its operation, so that some other must be sought. The next best test of ability would be found in examining the relative commercial wealth of both countries, and the relative expenses of both in articles of luxury ; and if it should be found that these two proportions very nearly coincided

with each other, it ought to be fairly pronounced that the best means of judging of the relative ability of the two countries had been discovered.

“Taking, then, the exports and imports for the last three years, those of Ireland would be found to be ... £10,925,000  
Great Britain ... .. 73,961,000

“In the proportion of seven to one.

“The next part of the proportion was to be found in excised articles of consumption, such as malt, beer, spirits, tea, tobacco, &c. The average of these for the last three years has been—

“Ireland ... .. £5,954,000  
Great Britain ... .. 46,891,000

“Being in the proportion of seven seven-eighths to one.

“As the result of these two proportions came so very close to each other, he would assume them as just, and take seven one-half to one, as the just ratio of the ability of Great Britain to that of Ireland.”

The fallacy of this reasoning needs scarcely further illustration. Ireland's power of contribution arose, not from some branches of her revenue, but all. She could have no power of contribution in cases in which she had no revenue. Her tea, wine, sugar, and tobacco receipts might have been as one to seven seven-eighths, though her customs, stamp, post-office, and assessed taxes might have been far more disproportioned. But under certain heads she had no revenue whatever. She had no income tax, no land tax, no taxes arising from bricks and tiles, candles, printed calicoes, starch, or soap. What was the ratio of her ability in reference to these? It could not have been regarded as even one to ten thousand; yet Lord Castlereagh did not scruple to assume, that, *on the whole*, the ability of Ireland was as one to seven one-half. If Ireland, however, had derived no revenue from such sources at the time the proportion was fixed, they might have been after rendered available. But who could tell to what extent they might be available; and has there not been more than forty years' experience to show, that new taxes may be imposed without producing revenue? In short, the theory of Lord Castlereagh, and the practice founded upon it, were utterly preposterous. The effect was soon apparent on the Irish debt, which swelled with a rapidity that made



the augmentation in sixteen years three hundred per cent., while that of the British debt was only sixty-four per cent.\*

According to the admission of Lord Castlereagh himself, there was no certain criterion of ability to be referred to; yet, Ireland was bound, by the terms of the act, to continue to pay for a period of twenty years, in the proportion of two parts to fifteen. It was provided that there should be periods for the revision of the proportions after the expiration of the first twenty years, and that they should not be "more distant than twenty years, and not less than seven years from each other." The short period would have been much more important to Ireland in the first interval than the second; and not to have given her, by an express clause in the act, an opportunity of escaping from the effects of any error that might have been committed in seven, or five, or even in three years, was a manifest injustice.

* British debt, ...	In 1801, £446,000,000	In 1817, £733,000,000
Irish debt, ...	„ 28,009,000	„ 112,000,000

These amounts include the funded and unfunded debt.—Paper 256, of Session 1824.

## CHAPTER VII.

## VIOLATION OF THE UNION ENGAGEMENTS.

WE have seen the plausibilities of Mr. Pitt in his description of the anticipated effects of the Union. Lord Castlereagh, in his speech of the 5th of February, 1800, asserted, that "if Ireland continued separate, she must get into debt much faster than Great Britain." In this there was evidently an implied engagement, that Ireland would not, when united, get into debt "much faster" than Great Britain. To what extent the pledge had been violated, the reader has just seen in the enormously-disproportioned increase of the Irish debt. "Much faster" was the phrase of Lord Castlereagh; what he must have meant was, that if the British debt increased sixty-four per cent., the Irish would increase one hundred or one hundred and twenty per cent. That would certainly be an increase "much faster" than the British; but instead of one hundred or one hundred and twenty per cent., the Irish increase was actually three hundred per cent., while the British was only sixty-four.

In the same speech Lord Castlereagh asserted, that, "in respect to past expenses, Ireland was to have no concern whatever with the debt of Great Britain; but the two countries were to unite, as to future expenses, on a strict measure of relative ability." These were Lord Castlereagh's words, according to a report of his speech, published by James Moore, College-green. In another report, by J. Rea, 57, Exchequer-street—and apparently by authority—there is some elaboration, but the meaning is exactly the same.

"The first principle which had been laid down by the liberality of the British parliament is, that there should be no retrospect in regard to past expenses; Ireland is to have no concern whatever with the past debt of Great Britain. All the wealth, all the territories, all the commercial power and advantages of Great Britain, are to be fully laid open and communicated to Ireland, without demanding from her any contribution whatever to the support of that immense debt which she has contracted in acquiring and securing. Such is the liberality of Great Britain; but as to the future, it is expected that the two countries should move forward together, and unite, with regard to their expenses, in the measure of their relative abilities."

The taxation of Ireland is now applicable to the payment of that very debt with which she was to have "no concern whatever;" and instead of the contribution to future expenses having been "in the measure of relative abilities," it was more than her resources enabled her to meet,—how much more is indicated by the three hundred per cent. augmentation of her debt, as compared with the sixty-four per cent. augmentation of the British debt. It is no answer to the charge, that a clause in the act of Union left the united parliament the power of "consolidating the Exchequers" under certain circumstances. The clause referred to is the following:—

"That if at any future day the separate debt of each country, respectively, shall have been liquidated, or if the value of their respective debts (estimated according to the amount of the interest and annuities attending the same, and of the sinking fund applicable to the reduction thereof, and to the period within which the whole capital of such debt shall appear to be redeemable by such sinking fund) shall be to each other in the same proportion with the respective contributions of each country, respectively; or if the amount by which the value of the larger of such debts shall vary from such proportion, shall not exceed one-hundredth part of the said value; and if it shall appear to the parliament of the United Kingdom that the respective circumstances of the two countries will thenceforth admit of their contributing, indiscriminately, by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each, to the future expenditure of the United Kingdom; it shall be competent to the parliament of the United Kingdom to declare that all future expense thenceforth to be incurred, together with the interest and charges of all joint debts contracted previous to such declaration, shall be so defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each country; and thenceforth from time to time, as circumstances may require, to impose and apply such taxes accordingly, subject only to such particular exemptions or abatements in Ireland, and in that part of Great Britain called Scotland, as circumstances may appear from time to time demand."

Three states of "circumstances" are here assumed to be probable, and to afford a warranty for a new fiscal arrangement. The first is the liquidation of the separate debts; the second, such an action on the amount or value of the respective debts as would bring them within the proportion of one to seven one-half; and, the third,



such a change in the affairs of Ireland as would render her ability equal, in proportion to her population, to that of Great Britain.

In the first case, Ireland could not have any thing to do with "past debt," for no such thing would be in existence, and the engagement of the minister would be fulfilled. In the second, Ireland would have no concern in the whole of the "past" of Great Britain, but such part only as would be proportioned to her assumed ability of payment. If Great Britain reduced, by liquidation, her debt of £446,000,000 to £228,000,000, the two past debts would be to each other as one to seven one-half; and would, therefore, be "in the same proportion with the respective contributions of each country respectively;" but £228,000,000 are not much more than one-half the debt for which Ireland has actually been rendered responsible; and even £228,000,000 would be far above the amount of "past" debt, for which any liability could *equitably* be imposed on Ireland, if her assumed ability of payment were, as it has been proved, far above her real ability.\* In the last case, Ireland could raise a third of the whole revenue instead of a twelfth or thirteenth; but, if she had so far advanced in prosperity, she could not, with any regard to the terms of the act, or the professions of its authors, be made responsible for the whole of the "past" debt of Great Britain, or any part out of proportion to the "respective contributions," or which would exceed her own "past" debt, by such an amount as would make that debt the one-third part of the total to be united, or consolidated. There would, however, be no "past" debt in Ireland to be provided for after a lapse of five or six years, if her power of contribution had so increased; for the act provided that a surplus, even of £5,000,000 annually, accruing from

\* On the 17th of February, 1800, Lord Castlereagh spoke as follows:—"I shall obviate the impression which may be made, that common taxes with Great Britain, will impose upon this kingdom heavier burdens than she would otherwise be called upon to support. Let the house, then, first consider that the charges of the debt of Great Britain amount to £20,000,000 a year (evidently including the sinking fund), and the charges of the debt of Ireland to £1,300,000 British a year; that common taxes are not to take place till either the past and separate debt of both countries shall be liquidated, or until they shall become to each other in the ratio of fifteen to two. Before this can take place, the taxes of Great Britain must be reduced by the amount of £10,000,000 a year; in which case the scale of her remaining taxation would be lowered to the scale of taxation in England, and the adoption of British taxation would become a benefit; a similar result, and to a greater degree, would take place, were the past debt of the two countries to be entirely liquidated."

the Irish revenues after payment of the charges imposed, could be applied to the liquidation of Irish debt.

These are the three cases supposed—the three states of “circumstances” which would have justified a demand upon Ireland to take any portion of the liability of “past” debt. No such “circumstances”—no such condition of public affairs, ever occurred. The past debt of Britain is not wholly, or, to the extent of one fraction, liquidated. Ireland had become bankrupt under her rate of contribution. Improved circumstances gave her, unhappily, no legitimate means of meeting new responsibilities; yet, she has now as much concern as Great Britain herself with the “past” debt of Great Britain!!! If her revenue amounted to £20,000,000 a year, it would all be applicable to the liquidation of the “past” debt of Britain.

It may be said that a fourth state of “circumstances” would satisfy the conditions of the Union as fully as any of the three supposed—namely, a disproportionate augmentation of the debt of Ireland. There is no such conjuncture contemplated in the clause before us. A disproportionate augmentation of the debt, is not liquidation, either in the whole or in part; and it assuredly is not an indication of prosperity.\* In the same report of the speech of Lord Castlereagh, from which we have just made a quotation, we read as follows:—

“The enemies of the measure of Union have founded much of their clamour upon the groundless supposition, that it is a mere financial project of the British minister to put his hands into the pockets of the Irish people. But, sir, I believe it will be found upon examination of the terms, that if any sacrifice be made, it will not be on the part of Ireland, but on the part of Great Britain. The settlement which is offered is that of advantage to Ireland; but it is offered, not as a bribe, not upon the mercenary principle, that Ireland would sacrifice what is essential to her happiness, to any pecuniary consideration, but it is offered on the fair and liberal ground of equal contribution.”

To make Ireland liable to the payment of any part of the “past” debt of Great Britain, by disproportionate borrowing, would be to falsify this statement, that the Union was not “a mere financial

\* There is, said Mr. Foster, an absurdity in arguing on a debt as if it were wealth; and that when we attain the given proportion by becoming poor, or doubling our debt from twenty-five to fifty millions, and England attain the same proportion by lessening hers, we grow wealthy thereby, and are able to pay share for share, instead of paying only one share for every seven and a-half.

project." It would not only be an intrusion of the minister's hands into the pockets of the Irish people, but an abstraction of their entire contents. It would be to make a "sacrifice" of Ireland, while the engagement was, that Britain should be sacrificed. It would be to prove that the Union had not been offered or founded, as has in countless ways been alleged, on the "fair and liberal ground of equal contribution," but upon open plunder.

Mr. Rice, in his speech in 1834, made a boast, that Great Britain could not be charged at least with a violation of the terms of the Union.

"A complaint," he said, "was made that the Union had been violated by the imposition of increased taxation in Scotland. This was a stronger case, the house will observe, than any advanced on the part of Ireland; for I have not heard it as yet stated, that the enactments of the Union have been violated by parliament. We hear it suggested, it is true, that the Union was in its terms unjust to Ireland, and that the Irish parliament made a bad bargain; but what was said by the Scotch Peers in 1713? Not only that the terms were unjust, but that those terms had been violated."

A "bad bargain" was a violation of the Irish Union; for the engagement was, that it should not be bad, but fair, and even "liberal." If the terms were unjust, it was a fraud. If the terms can, with the least colour of reason or plausibility, be held to bear any construction than that now put upon them, the fraud was the greater and more flagrant.

The whole scheme of fiscal policy pursued towards Ireland, since the Union, has been a violation of its engagements. There are some authorities on this subject which are entitled to attention.

In the report of the finance committee, of 1815, we find the following avowal:—

"For several years Ireland has advanced in permanent taxation more rapidly than Great Britain itself, notwithstanding the immense exertions of the latter country, including the extraordinary and war taxes—the permanent revenue of Great Britain having increased from the year 1801 in the proportion of sixteen one-half to ten; the whole revenue of Great Britain, including war taxes, as twenty-one one-fourth to ten; and the revenues of Ireland in the proportion of twenty-three to ten. But in the twenty-four years referred to your committee, the increase of Irish revenue has been in the proportion of forty-six three-fourths to ten."



In the debate on the consolidation of the Exchequers, in 1816, Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer, referred to this declaration:—

“You contracted with Ireland,” said he, “for an expenditure she could not meet—your own share of which you could not meet, but by sacrifices unexampled, by exertions, the tension of which only England could have borne. Ireland had been led to hope her expenditure would have been less than before she was united to you. In the fifteen years preceding the Union it amounted to £41,000,000; but in the fifteen years of Union, it swelled to the enormous amount of £148,000,000. The increase of her revenue would have more than discharged, without the aid of loans, an expenditure greater than that of the fifteen years which preceded 1801. Your own committee have shown you what an advance in permanent taxation Ireland had made.”

The Marquess of Lansdowne, in a speech on the state of Ireland, in 1822, complained that the increase of the Irish taxation, since the Union, was so excessive as to destroy revenue. He said that, in 1807, the revenue amounted to £4,378,241; that between that year and 1815, new taxes were imposed, from which an additional income of £3,376,000 was anticipated, but that the result was an absolute diminution of income, the revenue, in 1821, having been £533,000, under its amount in 1807.\*

In a discussion on a motion of Lord Althorpe, in 1824, in which a reduction of taxes in Ireland was recommended, as a measure mainly tending to “revive the manufactures of that country, and bring it into a prosperous condition,” Sir John Newport said:—

“Ever since the Union, the imperial parliament laboured to raise the scale of taxation in Ireland as high as it was in England, and had only to relinquish it, when it found that the attempt was wholly unproductive. For twelve years he had remonstrated against this scheme, and had foreseen the evils resulting from it of a beggared gentry and ruined peasantry.”

Mr. Poulett Thompson, on the 20th of March, 1830, moved for a select committee to inquire into the expediency of making a revision of the taxes, and took occasion to refer to Ireland as furnishing the most remarkable instance in history of the effects upon revenue produced by excessive taxation:—

\* Hansard, vol. vii. p. 1050.

"A case," he said, "is established in the instance of Ireland, which is written in characters too legible not to serve as a guide to future financiers—one which ought to bring shame on the memory of its authors." [He then stated the facts as to the decrease of the revenue between 1817 and 1821, mentioned by the Marquess of Lansdowne.] "Here is an example to prove that an increase of taxation does not tend to produce a corresponding increase of revenue, but, on the contrary, an actual diminution."

There was not a single burden imposed on Ireland in this interval which was not unjust, because disproportionate; and which was not a clear violation of the engagements of the Union?\*

An "equivalent" was granted to Scotland for the liability imposed upon her connected with English debt. The following is the account given of the proceeding by Lord Castlereagh:—

"I should have considered it, sir, as a most valuable circumstance in this arrangement, if the countries could at once have been so completely incorporated, as not to be under the necessity of having distinct revenues. This principle made a part of the Scotch Union; and it was naturally felt to be of such importance, that a great effort was made to equalize the circumstances of the two countries for that purpose. England had, at that period, a considerable debt; Scotland

\* A very curious illustration of the fiscal management of Ireland is to be found in a speech delivered by the Right Honourable James Fitzgerald, in the British House of Commons, on the 15th of March, 1805. He opposed the bringing up of the Report on the Irish Budget. He contended that the loan was made to a larger amount than was necessary, and the interest might have been defrayed without having recourse to any new taxes. The revenue of Ireland was only taken at £4,000,000, though every body knew it would be considerably more. The right honourable gentleman (Mr. Foster) imposed, last year, taxes of £1,150,000, by way of regulation, and £76,000 to defray the expenses of a direct loan; and he now stated that there was, out of last year's revenue, a surplus of £843,000, but that it must remain locked up in the Irish Treasury, until the proportion of Ireland, to the joint expenditure, should be paid. Upon this practice of retaining the surplus of the consolidated fund since the Union, it would follow that there must now be a total surplus of about *four millions* applicable to the expenses of the year. This was a mode of proceeding very disadvantageous to Ireland. The sums returned of duties due, but not immediately payable, were to the amount of £636,346, which either were, or ought now to be, in the Treasury of Ireland. This, as well as the balances in the hands of the collectors, ought to be a productive fund, and if it was not, he must call upon those who promised so much benefit from the Union, to put an end to this system of patronage and influence.

The payments made to the patrons, or owners, of certain Irish boroughs for the losses they would sustain by the Union, were bribes for votes to carry what was regarded an imperial object. Yet, a finance committee of the united parliament decided, that they should be charged exclusively to the account of Ireland.—Report, 262, of Sessions, 1811. These bribes exceeded £1,200,000.

had none. An accurate calculation was therefore made of the sum Scotland ought to receive as an indemnity for subjecting herself to the charges of the debt of England, and the sum being ascertained, was paid by England as an equivalent. . . . I lament that the circumstances of Great Britain and Ireland do not at present enable us to pursue the measure of identity with equal strictness. It were to be wished that there was not an insurmountable bar to a common system and a common treasury, and that we could become, like counties of the same kingdom, subject to the same system of finances. Were our entire expenditures common (which would happen if neither kingdom had separate debts, or if their debts were in the proportion of their ability), by no system whatever could they be made to contribute so strictly according to their means, as by being subject to the same taxes, equally bearing upon the great objects of taxation in both countries. Such, however, is the disproportion of the debts of the two kingdoms to each other at present, that a common system for the present is impossible; nor could any system of equivalent be applied for equalizing their contributions. It is, therefore, necessary that the debts of the two countries should be kept distinct, and that, of course, their taxation should be separate and proportionate."

The "equivalent" given to Scotland was £398,085—a sum, we need not observe, far more considerable in 1707 than it would be in our times. It was equal to one-fifth of the entire English debt, and was more than six times the amount of the Scotch revenue for a single year. If a proportionate "equivalent" had been given to Ireland, what would have been its amount? Six times the Irish revenue of 1800 would exceed £20,000,000. Lord Castlereagh assumed that "no system of equivalent" was practicable, whether he meant that the money necessary for the purpose could not be realized, or that the taxation of the two countries was too unequal to admit of assimilation on any terms however favourable to Ireland. It is certain, at all events, that no equivalent was attempted in 1800, and the debts and taxation were left separate; but it is equally certain that no equivalent was attempted, or even made a subject of observation, in 1816, though the debts were completely united, and the taxation equalized in those instances most affecting the comforts of the people. After 1816 several new inflictions of assimilated taxes took place without the utterance of one syllable concerning an equivalent; and, indeed, all the essential objects which Lord Castlereagh said it was



so desirable to attain, but which could not be attained, in 1800, from the impracticability of securing an adequate equivalent for Ireland, have since been achieved with as little apparent thought of an equivalent, as if such a thing had never been heard of, or made the subject of one passing allusion in the Irish parliament.\* There have been grants for Irish "Miscellaneous Services," but there have been similar grants for Great Britain; and such grants could not have been intended as an equivalent, for they were guaranteed to Ireland for twenty years at the same time that Lord Castlereagh was lamenting that the "Scotch principle" could not be carried out in the case of Ireland. An equivalent might have been rendered to Ireland, at least for the debt responsibility, by mitigated taxation; but the policy has been to increase the Irish taxation, and its increase has, in point of fact, as the reader has already seen, exceeded the increase even of the British taxation. It may be said that all the taxes are not yet equalized, and that the whiskey duty and gin duty are not

\* The following is an extract from the fifteenth article of the Scotch Union: "That before the Union of the said kingdoms, the sum of £398,085 10s. be granted to her majesty by the parliament of England for the uses after mentioned, being the equivalent to be answered to Scotland for such parts of the said customs and excises upon all excisable liquors with which that kingdom is to be charged upon the Union, as will be applicable to the payment of the said debts of England, according to the proportions which the present customs in Scotland, being £30,000 per annum, do bear to the customs in England, computed at £1,341,559 per annum; and which the present excises on excisable liquors in Scotland, being £33,500 per annum, do bear to the excises on excisable liquors in England, computed at £947,602 per annum: which sum of £398,085 10s. shall be due and payable from the time of the Union; and in regard that, after the Union of Scotland becoming liable to the same customs and duties payable on import and export, and to the same excises on all excisable liquors as in England, as well upon that account, as upon the account of the increase of trade and people (which will be the happy consequence of the Union), the said revenues will much improve beyond the before-mentioned annual values thereof, of which no present estimate can be made: yet, nevertheless, for the reasons aforesaid, there ought to be a proportionable equivalent answered to Scotland. It is agreed, that after the Union there shall be an account kept of the said duties arising in Scotland, to the end it may appear what ought to be answered to Scotland as an equivalent for such proportion of the said increase as shall be applicable to the payment of the debts of England, &c. And for the further and more effectual answering the several ends hereafter mentioned, it is agreed, that from and after the Union the whole increase of the revenues of customs, and duties on import and export, and excise upon excisable liquors in Scotland, over and above the annual produce of the said respective duties, as above stated, shall go, and be applied for the term of seven years to the uses hereafter mentioned; and that upon the said account there shall be answered to Scotland annually, from the end of seven years after the Union, an equivalent in proportion to such part of the said increase as shall be applicable to the debts of England."

There are other stipulations of a similar character, and all show the pains taken to ensure contingent as well as certain benefits to Scotland, as her equivalent.

the same. This is true of Ireland, but it is also true of Scotland, and yet Scotland got her equivalent, and her people enjoy a portion of its benefits to this day, after a lapse of one hundred and thirty-seven years. There are, however, taxes in Great Britain which do not at all exist in Ireland. Yes, but such had been the case in 1800; and Ireland, at the same time, had her advantage of a lower scale of duty than the British in every instance in which the Exchequer made a demand upon the pockets of the people. Ireland has lost that most important benefit, and where is her equivalent? She has her full share of the responsibility of the debt, and where is her equivalent? Will it be said that it is to be found in the loan fund of half a million, from which the Treasury makes a profit—raising the money at three per cent., and lending it out at five per cent. In short, there has been no equivalent for Ireland in any shape or form, and this is one of the most obvious and shameless violations of the engagements of the Union.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## EFFECTS OF THE UNION.

THE Union, according to Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, "subjected Ireland to an expenditure which she could not meet," and under which she suffered bankruptcy. According to the report of the finance committee just referred to, Ireland advanced in taxation since 1801, more than Britain herself. According to Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Poulett Thompson, increase of taxation was so excessive as to destroy revenue. According to Sir John Newport, the minister persevered for twelve years in a policy, the effects of which were to be seen in a "beggared gentry and ruined peasantry." All these evils must be regarded as direct consequences of the Union, as they were unexampled in the worst times of the Irish parliament.

The increase of absenteeism was never denied to be a certain effect of the Union. Mr. Pitt admitted that a loss to Ireland would be erected by the removal of the legislative body; but amusingly observed, that "some compensation would be made by an increased predilection for English habits." He contended, at the same time, that the loss would not be great, and that much was to be anticipated from an augmentation of the "aggregate stock of wealth and commerce."

Mr. Jebb calculated that the loss to Dublin would be £610,000 a year. "Should this calculation," he observed, "be esteemed too high, the overplus may be set against the large sums to be expended in appeals, soliciting acts of parliament, and various other matters of business, which must then be transacted in London." . . . . . This £600,000 is an annual capital which constantly puts into motion other capitals, the sum total of which it is impossible to calculate: the coachmaker, for instance, employed by the nobleman, himself employs the baker, the brewer, the grocer, the tailor, and they in return employ each other, and thousands of others; so that the expenditure of a single income constitutes a part of the capital of thousands of individuals. Here, then, merely in this single view of the commercial part of the subject, shall we surrender an *annual* productive capital of £600,000, equal to £12,000,000 sterling,



which sets in motion other capitals without end, for distant, obscure, theoretical, and probably illusive gain."

The exchange committee of 1804, assumed in their report, on the authority of Mr. Puget, that the absentee remittances were then £2,000,000. They are believed by most intelligent persons to have since increased to £4,000,000; Mr. M'Culloch's estimate is £3,500,000; Mr. Ensor's, £4,000,000;\* Lord Cloncurry's, £4,000,000, Mr. N. P. Leader's, £4,000,000, and according to Alderman Hayes, of Cork, the estimate of a later authority is £4,650,000. The whole rental of Ireland is supposed at present to be above £12,000,000. More than a third is believed to belong to absentees; and it is to be observed, that we have a new class of absentees (if they may so be called)—English money-lenders, who have, for many years, been making advances to Irish proprietors to relieve their estates, and have their return in half-yearly remittances of Irish rent. Mr. Puget stated, that the remittances in 1804 were "considerably greater than before the rebellion;" and it is supposed that at the period of the Union they amounted to about £1,500,000. If this estimate be correct, and if these remittances now amount to £4,000,000, there is an additional absentee drain of £2,500,000 produced by the Union, besides a revenue drain of a magnitude and constancy entirely unknown when Ireland had a parliament.

Absenteeism is a calamity peculiarly Irish, and it is a direct emanation of the policy at all times adopted towards this country by the English government. No authority can be more impressive or trustworthy on the point than that of Lord Clare.

"It is a subject," said he, on the 10th February, 1800, "of curious and important speculation, to look back to the forfeitures of Ireland incurred in the last century. The superficial contents of the island

\* Mr. Ensor gave evidence before the parliamentary committee of 1830, on the state of the Irish poor, and the following was the examination on this subject:—

"Can you tell the committee what portion of the rental of Ireland is supposed to be spent in other countries? I have made a calculation of that particularly, and I should suppose about £4,000,000. What proportion do you suppose that to be to the whole? Probably, a third, or more. On what grounds do you form your calculation of the amount of the Irish income spent out of Ireland? By putting down the names of absentees and their rental, not throughout the whole country, but in some counties. I took two counties on the credit of the bishop of Limerick, and in two counties, he said there was nearly half a million. These were Kerry and Limerick: £300,000 in Limerick, and £1,500,000 in Kerry."—*Third Report*, p. 481.

are calculated at 11,042,682 acres. Let us now examine the state of forfeitures :—

	Acres.
Confiscated in the reign of James the First, the whole of the province of Ulster, containing ... ..	2,836,837
Set out by the Court of Claims at the Restoration... ..	7,800,000
Forfeitures of 1688 ... ..	1,060,792
Total,	11,697,629

So that the whole of your island has been confiscated, with the exception of the estates of five or six old families of English blood, some of whom had been attainted in the reign of Henry the Eighth, but recovered their possessions before Tyrone's rebellion, and had the good fortune to escape the pillage of the English republic, inflicted by Cromwell; and no inconsiderable portion of the island has been confiscated twice, or perhaps thrice, in the course of a century. The situation, therefore, of the Irish nation at the Revolution, stands unparalleled in the history of the inhabited world. If the wars of England, carried on here from the reign of Elizabeth, had been waged against a foreign enemy, the inhabitants would have retained their possessions under the established law of civilized nations, and their country have been annexed, as a province, to the British empire. But the continued and persevering resistance of Ireland to the British crown, during the whole of the last century, was mere rebellion, and the municipal law of England attached upon the crime. What, then, was the situation of Ireland at the Revolution? and what is it at this day? The whole property and power of the country has been conferred, by successive monarchs of England, upon an English colony, composed of three sets of adventurers, who poured into this country at the termination of three successive rebellions. Confiscation is their common title; and from their first settlement they have been hemmed in on every side by the old inhabitants of the island, brooding over their discontents in sullen indignation."

The resistance of Ireland was not to the British crown, but to the plunder and tyranny of the agents of British power in the country. More than three-fourths of the whole forfeitures were sacrifices arising from the loyalty of the Irish people to the British crown. The other forfeitures were the consequence of some outrageous acts of injustice, in which English adventurers were the interested and unscrupulous actors. But the origin of the forfeitures is not the question at present. That they were of the character and magnitude described, is beyond all disputation. That they have

created a state of things absolutely without a parallel, no one can have the temerity to deny. The individual, however, from whom we have taken the history of these fatal transactions, affected to believe that they rendered an Union unavoidable. "What," he asked, "was the security of the English settlers at the Revolution? and what is the security of their descendants at this day? The powerful, commanding protection of Great Britain." No real or lasting security can emanate from such a source; and it would be a far more philosophical and statesmanlike application of the facts contained in this melancholy recital, if they were used to show that they should have been regarded as a conclusive reason why Ireland should not have been forcibly deprived of a resident legislature, if there were no other to be adduced against a measure so sweeping, violent, and revolutionary.

Not according to the Irish system were other subjects of the British crown treated. The Scotch heritable jurisdictions were abolished for the relief and improvement of the condition of the population of Scotland, and the compensations were paid by the English Treasury. Nay, more, we are informed by Anderson's *History of Commerce*, under the date of 1752, that the lately forfeited estates of Scotland "are, by parliament, appropriated for civilizing and improving the Highlands and Isles, and for the encouragement of the linen manufacture—already greatly improved—and its mines and fisheries." Such was the mode adopted of applying the Scotch forfeitures, and laying a foundation for social advancement in North Britain. The Scottish people had a natural repugnance to an union, but their parliament was, in reality, of little use to their country. It was not a source of wealth, for their country was miserably poor. Nothing could be lower than their revenue, commerce, and agriculture; and Scotland was in every respect in a condition which could not be damaged by an union. The absence of its handful of needy representatives, must have been wholly imperceptible to the people at home. If they had considerable fortunes to spend, they did not remove their wealth from a country labouring for centuries under a wasting absenteeism. But Scotland has lost her parliament, and she has improved. These are the two facts which are associated in all references to the country in latter times. They are spoken of as cause and effect, but they stand in no such relation. For many years after her Union, Scotland made no progress at all; and this could not have happened if the Union were



any source whatever of her prosperity. Until an advanced period of the last century, general manufactures were not known in Scotland; and Mr. Foster has shown, that though its linens increased, the improvement was not at all comparable to that of the Irish. Scotland is at this moment before Ireland in commerce and revenue; but Mr. Jebb, as the reader has seen, referred to the remarkable fact, that at the close of the American war the exports of Ireland to Great Britain alone, were nearly three times as great as those of Scotland to all the world. Even at the commencement of the present century the Scotch revenue was much lower than the Irish, though it is now much higher; and this fact alone is worth volumes with reference to the present inquiry. From 1801 to 1814 the following was the progress of the Scotch revenue:—

1801	...	£1,985,794	1808	...	£3,544,111
1802	...	2,230,993	1809	...	3,632,832
1803	...	2,246,028	1810	...	4,188,814
1804	...	2,171,973	1811	...	4,001,347
1805	...	2,692,624	1812	...	4,326,797
1806	...	3,182,677	1813	...	4,383,751
1807	...	3,558,784	1814	...	4,483,014

In 1844 the Scotch revenue had advanced to £5,145,563, though the Irish, which was considerably beyond it forty-three years ago, is generally set down at only £4,000,000. The Scotch Union cannot account for this state of things, though the Irish Union may help to a solution of the problem. Scotch prosperity, when it had a commencement, was evidently out of the range of any possible influence from the Scotch Union. But, then, it will still be urged, that Scotland has prospered *after* her Union. To this the direct answer is, as far as the fact is sought to be applied to the case of Ireland, that Ireland has *not* prospered. It is plain that the "Union" argument cannot hold good in totally opposite cases—one, in which there has been prosperity; and the other, in which there has been most calamitous adversity. There is, indeed, something very peculiar not in the ancient but very recent state of Scotland. England has made no advance comparable to hers since the commencement of the present century. What could the incident of 1707 have had to do with such a result? Why was Scotland so much beneath even Ireland at the close of the American war? The answer is not, we repeat, to be found in any thing connected with the "Union"—unless, indeed, with *Irish* Union, which appears incontestably to have

handed over to Scotland a great portion of the trade conducted with profit by Ireland herself when she had a parliament.

We have adverted to a "revenue drain," as well as one arising from absenteeism. This drain was almost wholly unknown before the Irish Union. In the fervour of its gratitude the Irish parliament voted twenty thousand seamen after the acquisition of legislative independence, and there was a small allowance for troops in the West Indies. But there was no regular appropriation of Irish taxes to imperial purposes, and hence the "propositions" of 1785. The Union imposed upon Ireland a contribution of this character, but it was not felt until after the conclusion of the war; for the army expenditure alone reached, in many years, to a sum running very close upon the total amount of the Irish revenue. Every year, however, after the war, brought on a reduction of government expenditure; and the revenue, at length, which, for so long a period, did not equal that expenditure, began to exceed it. This has brought about a new state of Irish affairs—one anticipated by the sagacity of Newenham, but of which the British government appear to have been wholly unconscious or unmindful.

"The future demands," said Mr. Newenham, writing in 1807, "of Britain on Ireland, when these demands shall cease to be covered, as they are at present, by a vast annual influx of money into the latter, in the shape of loans, will appear to be a subject eminently worthy of early and serious consideration on the part of those who exercise the powers of government."

There is no evidence that the British minister ever thought of, or regarded, this change; for his constant efforts, even to the latest times, have been to reduce expenditure, and "assimilate," or raise taxation, of the powers of enduring which expenditure, itself, is a most prolific source.

There are official records to decide the point as to the revenue drain. Many persons believe that the Irish revenue is below the expenditure for public purposes in Ireland. The charges for civil government, army, pensions, police, and even debt, are great. There are payments for "miscellaneous services," charities, education, and other objects. All, however, are provided for by the Irish revenue. No money comes now from England to meet any charge; and, after all demands, under all heads, are satisfied, a surplus remains of the receipts of revenue, which is remitted to England with the absentee rents.

One of the official records is included in a series of papers, moved

for by Mr. John O'Connell, M. P. for the city of Kilkenny, in 1842. It was a continuation of a paper moved for by Mr. W. F. Finn, former member for the county of Kilkenny, nine years before; and the items are the following:—

	From the British Exchequer to the Irish.	From the Irish Exchequer to the British.
Remitted up to the 5th January, 1833, as per parliamentary paper referred to,	£8,251,274 8 4½	£19,640,435 8 3
In the year 5th January, 1834, ... ..		400,000 0 0
"    "    1835, ... ..		550,000 0 0
"    "    1836, ... ..		1,200,000 0 0
"    "    1837, ... ..		1,300,000 0 0
"    "    1838, ... ..		1,000,000 0 0
"    "    1839, ... ..		375,000 0 0
"    "    1840, ... ..		730,000 0 0
"    "    1841, ... ..		380,000 0 0
"    "    1842, ... ..	80,000 0 0	420,000 0 0
	£8,331,274 8 4½	£25,995,435 8 3
Deduct British remittance,		8,331,274 8 4½
Balance of remittance,		£17,664,160 19 10½

This total may be increased by some considerable items. It does not include the tea duties which were paid from 1829 to 1834 (inclusive) in London. For the aggregate of these duties in that interval, a sum may be set down of £3,100,000, supposing them to be as high in each year as they were in 1835. It does not include any portion of the uncredited revenue, which is very moderately estimated at £400,000 annually.\* Under this head £8,000,000 may be added, without going farther back than a period of twenty years, making the total, down to 1842, £28,760,000.

\* The woods and forests' revenue drawn from Ireland, has been for many years credited to the British Exchequer. It is now about £62,000 a year, but sales have been effected, the produce of which may justify us in adding to the amount £10,000 more. It was £72,000 in 1826, when it was included in the Irish accounts. There is no duty on hops paid in Ireland; for that article £20,000 a year might have been set down in former years, but it is now £5,000 less. There is no duty on refined sugar collected in Ireland; all the old bakeries having for many years been closed. The quantity of that article imported in 1825 was 66,393 cwt., upon which a duty must have been paid, in British ports, of £92,630. The uncredited taxation on refined sugar is, at present, at least, £100,000 a year. A great portion of the revenue arising from the consumption of paper and glass in Ireland, is paid in Great Britain. The consumption of tea in Ireland is about the one-seventh of the British, and of sugar the one-eighth, and of wine the one-tenth. The consumption of tobacco is more than a fourth; but taking the consumption of paper and glass to be not greater than a twelfth, the uncredited taxation on these articles cannot be less than £100,000 a year. The value of the entire imports into Ireland, from Great Britain, in 1825, was £7,000,000; of these the value of the produce and manufactures of Great Britain itself, was £3,688,000. If these articles were affected only to the extent of two per cent., by taxation, Ireland may reckon on their account an uncredited revenue of £73,760. We have in these five



In the two years ended January 5, 1843 and 1844, it appears, from the annual finance accounts, that there were the following sums unappropriated in the Irish Treasury, and therefore remitted to England.

1843	...	£668,611
1844	...	530,170
		<hr/>
		£1,198,781

Before these amounts of surplus taxes could have been remitted to England (and be it again observed, that they were only a portion of the revenue drain), every payment on account of Ireland must, of course, have been previously made from Irish taxes. It is by no means unnecessary to press this point upon the attention of the reader; for it is frequently asserted, and universally believed, in England, that the government of Ireland could not be sustained for an hour without large remittances from London. According to the *Quarterly Review*, "tithes and rackrents" have been collected in Ireland by a soldiery paid from English taxes. According to the *Times* newspaper, the whole revenue of Ireland is not sufficient to pay the interest on the Irish debt, due at the Union. According to Mr. Spring Rice's speech on the Repeal question, in 1833, "English gold" is necessary even to the "loans made to Ireland."

Adding the surplus revenue to the uncredited taxation we have a total of about £1,100,000 a year. This, with the absentee remittances, makes a drain of £5,100,000 annually. The loss to capital and industry is to that extent beyond all disputation. If Great Britain sustained a proportionate loss, it could not be less than £60,000,000 a year. Could Great Britain bear this, and prosper? could she bear it for any considerable succession of years, and avoid ruin? It is often mentioned that the Scotch, in latter years, endure a great drain of their capital. They do, and, of course, solely from their advance in wealth. They have no absentee sufferings at all comparable to the Irish; and they remitted, at the commencement of this century, probably £1,000,000, in the year of the produce of taxation to London. This drain upon Scotland has since enormously increased,

items a total of £360,000, and we have set down nothing for fruits, spices, drugs, foreign manufactures (such as gloves and silk fabrics), small parcels of foreign spirits, tea, wine, and sugar, imported into Ireland by country dealers from Glasgow, Liverpool, and Bristol, and which never go into "bond"—the duty being paid in the places where they are purchased. For these small parcels of tea, sugar, wine, and foreign spirits, if they only form the one-twentieth part of our consumption, under their heads, we may set down £60,000, and for the other articles referred to, probably half that amount. To take, then, the whole of the uncredited revenue at £400,000 a year, is to underrate its actual amount.

but the means of sustaining it have been produced by the undoubted increase of Scotch wealth, or what is regarded as wealth. A large portion of the fund holders are residents of Scotland; and if they be entitled to receive from London £4,000,000 of dividends, it is more easily to be imagined how Scotland can remit £4,000,000 of taxes. But the Scotch drain, whatever it may be, is not, we fancy, accounted amongst the blessings of that country, and it is very clear that it can be no source of its prosperity. The Scotch are an extremely frugal people in their general expenditure, and their transactions are immensely stimulated by credit. It is a great doubt what the result would be, if a settlement of general accounts were forced in Scotland by a "Peel's Bill;" and hence the great horror which is so observable at any glimmering of interference with its monetary system. But putting these matters out of consideration, and taking the present state of the revenue of Scotland as a criterion, it is three times better able to bear a drain, than Ireland; though, at the close of the American war, according to Mr. Jebb, the resources of Ireland arising from exports to Great Britain alone, were "*nearly three times* as great as those of Scotland with all the world!"

Other fiscal grievances, of a most oppressive character, may be included in the consequences of the Union. They are—

1st—A greatly disproportionate increase of taxation during the war, already referred to, and,

2dly—A still more disproportionate relief since the peace.

The first process necessarily involved the withdrawal of those advantages of moderate rates under all heads of impost which the Irish enjoyed when they had a parliament. Of what importance these advantages were has been shown, incautiously for his argument, by one of Mr. Spring Rice's returns, made up for the debate of 1834. We allude to a series of tables of which the following is an abstract, and which show the amount of gain that accrued to Ireland by a lower standard of taxation than that of Great Britain in the years named. The following are given as the "principal articles upon which a difference existed between the British and Irish rates of duty:"—

Barilla and ashes	Tobacco,
Iron, bar	Wine,
Salt, foreign	Wood,
Spirits, foreign	Salt, British
Sugar,	Coals,
Tea,	Other articles.

The following exhibits, in each year, "the excess of revenue be-

yond the amount actually collected, which would have accrued if the British rates had been paid upon the quantities consumed in Ireland:”—

1801 ...	£1,350,924	1818 ...	£1,309,812
1802 ...	1,443,286	1819 ...	1,326,313
1803 ...	1,658,930	1820 ...	1,385,039
1804 ...	1,785,801	1821 ...	1,505,426
1805 ...	1,806,343	1822 ...	1,646,125
1806 ...	1,811,614	1823 ...	224,490
1807 ...	2,318,051	1824 ...	303,076
1808 ...	2,147,614	1825 ...	265,959
1809 ...	2,336,010	1826 ...	254,927
1810 ...	2,168,873	1827 ...	240,264
1811 ...	2,176,029	1828 ...	324,839
1812 ...	2,156,585	1829 ...	227,981
1813 ...	2,010,989	1830 ...	215,207
1814 ...	1,536,760	1831 ...	82,234
1815 ...	1,336,101	1832 ...	26,340
1816 ...	1,097,766	1833 ...	30,141
1817 ...	1,406,792		

It is clearly seen in the above, that, as the Union receded, the special advantages of Ireland diminished. Wood was the only article in which there was a difference of rates in 1833, and the amount was so insignificant as £30,141!

The grievance under the head of Withheld Relief, has been really enormous. It is thus exhibited in the Appendix, No. 11, p. 318 of Mr. John O'Connell's "Argument for Ireland," the amounts being taken from Sessional Paper 573, of 1843:—

Relief of Taxation from 1815 to 1843.

Great Britain,	...	...	...	...	...	£45,550,000
Ireland,	...	...	...	...	...	2,400,000

Taxes imposed from 1815 to 1843.

Great Britain,	...	...	...	...	...	£10,620,000
Ireland,	...	...	...	...	...	1,060,000*

Taxes from 1800 to 1815.

Great Britain,	...	...	...	...	...	£30,000,000
Ireland,	...	...	...	...	...	4,450,000

Total taxes imposed from the Union to 1843.

Great Britain,	...	...	...	...	...	£37,000,000
Ireland,	...	...	...	...	...	5,560,000

"Thus the relief given to Ireland was to that of Great Britain, as one to eighteen, while her share of the taxes imposed has been higher than as one to seven!"

\* "The abandoned spirit duty is, of course, deducted from the 1815-43 amount of Irish taxes imposed."



To these great fiscal wrongs may be added a diminution of expenditure where it might injuriously affect Ireland, without a perceptible benefit to Great Britain. Examples are to be found in the abolition of the grants for linen and fisheries.\* To show with what perseverance and rigour this policy has been pursued to the most recent times, it may be mentioned that Earl de Grey commenced his government by an attempt to withdraw the customary payments from the principal charities of Dublin. He appointed a commission to report upon them, consisting of Mr. George Alexander Hamilton, Mr. David Charles Latouche, and Mr. John Barlow. In his letter of instructions he stated that those charities afforded him "matter of serious consideration." He said he understood no state support is given "to similar institutions in other parts of the empire." He admitted, that "when these grants were originally made, peculiar circumstances may have operated, and no doubt did, to justify them here, which circumstances did not apply elsewhere." But if it were not the opinion of this chief governor, that the state of the country was such as not to warrant those charities, he would not have avowed that they afforded him "matter for serious consideration," or appointed his commission of inquiry. The following were the institutions referred to:—

Female Orphan House, ... ..	£1,000
Westmoreland Lock Hospital, ... ..	2,500
Lying-in Hospital, ... ..	1,000
Dr. Stevens's Hospital, ... ..	1,500
Cork-street Fever Hospital, ... ..	3,800
Hospital for Incurables, ... ..	500
Meath Hospital, ... ..	about 800
Cow-Pock Institution, ... ..	200
Shelter for Females Discharged from Prison, ... ..	50
Water for public fountains, Meath Liberty, ... ..	110
Water for poor of Liberty, ... ..	23

It thus appears that the institutions which gave the new Irish government so much concern, imposed a burden on the imperial Exchequer, not quite amounting to £11,500 a year!!!

\* Some years ago the linen, yarn, and flaxseed merchants of Derry presented a petition to parliament, stating, that "the petitioners, instead of exporters, have been compelled to be importers of their commodities. Many causes have partially contributed to this, but the petitioners attribute it principally to the law of the 6th of George IV. c. 122, which abolishes the inspection of flaxseed on importation after 1st July, 1826." It is stated that in Holland, Russia, and America there are inspectors, and that they are deemed indispensable to the well-being of trade in these countries.

Lord de Grey's commissioners were of course Tories, but they did not sympathize much in his feelings on this matter. They reported that the grants rested on the grounds of "expediency and necessity." They observed, that,—

"Immediately after the Union, Dublin ceased to be a metropolis as regards the wealthy, while it continued a metropolis as regards the poor; and in no inconsiderable degree it has remained so since. The causes, therefore, which induced those who framed the articles of Union, to introduce stipulations into that measure as regards Dublin, appear to us to be still in extensive operation. Other causes likewise (not, however, having operation on Dublin alone)—the increase of population without a corresponding increase in wealth; the want of capital; the decay of manufactures in Ireland, operating to increase the proportion of poor—have operated likewise, to increase rather than diminish the cogency of those reasons which led to the stipulations in the articles of Union."

Earl de Grey appearing to have been of opinion, that voluntary and compulsory contributions to charities were limited in Dublin, the commission took occasion to undeceive him by the following table:—

Assessments and Subscriptions.	1839.	1840.	1841.	Totals.
Compulsory ... ..	£155,320	£179,550	£169,880	£504,750
Voluntary ... ..	45,743	33,533	32,101	111,377
Total	201,063	213,083	201,981	616,127

All the "voluntary" subscriptions were not, it appears, ascertained, for there were returns from only ninety-two out of two hundred institutions; yet the commissioners were able to make out a total of £616,127 in a city in which Lord de Grey's government imagined that nothing was done for charities, except by grants from the imperial Exchequer. A more remarkable sample of the intelligence which is usually exhibited in the direction of Irish affairs, need not be cited!

The result of the representations of the commissioners was, that the charities were suffered to remain as they were; but to what period the respite is to extend, it would be hazardous to say, judging from the past!

Amongst grants for "miscellaneous services in Ireland," which

have been withdrawn since the Union, were the following, setting them down at the maximum amount:—

Linen manufacturers, ... ..	£19,938
Farming Society, ... ..	4,615
Cork Institution, ... ..	2,308
Board of Inland Navigation, ... ..	6,100
Paving Board, ... ..	9,231
Board of First Fruits, ... ..	55,385
Wide-street Board, ... ..	18,733
House of Industry, ... ..	48,346
Hibernian Society for soldiers' children, ... ..	13,787
Hibernian Marine Society, ... ..	3,252
Society for Discountenancing Vice, ... ..	9,000
Protestant Charter Schools, ... ..	38,344
Foundling Hospital, ... ..	35,851*

Whatever may be thought of the policy of some of those grants, there is no doubt that the local effect of their abolition is considerably prejudicial, while the advantage to the empire at large must be entirely unfelt. A judicious and unexceptionable application of similar amounts of the general revenue, would go a very short way towards realizing the promises of imperial bounty, held out at the Union.

The Dublin Society still receives a pittance, but it is greatly reduced. The lord lieutenant's establishment, which, in certain departments, was, a few years ago, £68,000 a year, is now brought down to £16,000. Many boards have been altogether abolished. The result is, that the expenditure on the collection of the existing revenue is reduced; but it is a dear-bought advantage to Great Britain, considering the dissatisfaction hourly created by these changes, and the undoubted embarrassment occasioned to public business in Ireland.

A large reduction of the war expenditure on the army stationed in Ireland, was unavoidable; but the effects must have been greatly injurious to a country in which there is so little profitable employment for its enormous population. The payment for army and ordnance in the ten years succeeding the Union, amounted to upwards of £36,000,000, being an annual average of £3,600,000. In the last ten years the average has, probably, been £1,000,000, making a total difference under these heads of £26,000,000, in the short period of

\* In the succeeding chapter may be seen the progress of "assimilated" taxation in Ireland. It forms a striking contrast with the ceaseless reductions in the "miscellaneous services."



ten years. A great reduction of the army was, we say, unavoidable, but the effects upon Ireland might have been considerably mitigated, by making this country, as far as was practicable, a station for troops, and giving it a large participation in the naval expenditure.

From all we have stated on this subject, one conclusion is inevitable: that there is a great revolution in the fiscal condition of Ireland. It is momentous; and it should, as Mr. Newenham so justly observed, have been a subject "of early and serious consideration on the part of those who use the powers of government." It received no attention in that quarter. This would have been *impossible* if a parliament had been sitting in Ireland.

In the category of "effects of the Union" must be placed the fatal tardiness with which emancipation was carried, and the wrongs done to Ireland in parliamentary and municipal reform.\* If the Irish people had the control in the management of their own affairs, which domestic legislation would necessarily confer, they would have no grievances of this character to complain of. Mr. Newenham thus sketched the condition of Ireland, before it obtained its short-lived independence:—

"In eight years, there passed in England no less than eleven hundred and twenty-four acts, for bridges, roads, canals, draining, enclosing, &c., which was ten times more than all the acts for internal improvement, encouragement of industry, advancement of trade, or support of manufactures that passed in Ireland from the Revolution to the establishment of Irish national independence, being a period of near one hundred years; and of these a great many were illusive, nugatory, and ineffectual; some were merely explanatory of foregoing ones, and several were requisite supplements to others. Ireland was unimproved and uncultivated; its aspect was wild and dreary; its labouring poor was slothful, miserable, and totally destitute of all those comforts which the same class in England rank among the necessaries of life; its trade, with the exception of the linen manufacture, was almost limited to the export of its redundant beef, butter, pork, tallow, hides, and cattle; and the import of that corn which it was not encouraged to grow, of those manufactures which it was

\* As to parliamentary reform, it may be sufficient to say, that Ireland received an addition only of five members over her hundred, though Lord Castlereagh himself admitted she might have had eight at the Union. Wales received an addition of six members, though, in the average of population, revenue, and rental, she does not come up to the standard of Cork.

discouraged or restrained from engaging in, and of those other consumable articles of luxury which the higher classes alone enjoyed the means of purchasing."

This state of things would appear to have returned since the Union. There is little legislation; and it is, for the most part, of a pernicious character. An English traveller (Bicheno) remarked, in 1829, that, between that year and 1816, eight acts, or modifications of acts, of parliament were passed, relative to land, and that they had the effect only of strengthening the hands of the landlord against the tenant—a power too long and too generally abused in Ireland. Melancholy traces of this newly-acquired authority have been observable, for more than twenty years, in what is called the "depopulating system"—which means, in too many instances, the protrusion of tenantry to perish of cold and hunger on the roadside.\* Legislation has yet found no remedy for this frightful evil; and it is left even without restraint, as far as regards the responsibilities which should properly attach to its authors. The new Poor Law is necessarily ineffective, for there is no out-door relief; and the workhouses provide a most expensive accommodation, for probably not one-twentieth of our destitute population—supplying, in itself, an illustration of the want of provident and really useful legislation in Ireland! It would appear, that time has been found for the passing of only fifteen "local or personal" acts for Ireland, since the commencement of the present reign, though there have been nearly *thirty* times that number of such acts, or four hundred and forty-five, passed for Great Britain.† There are representatives of Ireland, who have been for years endeavouring to press Irish grievances, under these

\* In 1825, Mr. John Leslie Foster, many years a baron of the Exchequer, gave the following evidence, before the Lords' Committee, on the state of Ireland:—

"Within the last two years, a perfect panic, on the subject of population, has prevailed amongst all persons interested in land in Ireland; and they are, at this moment, applying a corrective check, of the most violent description, to that increase of population, which there has been too much reason to deplore. The principle of dispeopling estates, is going on in every part of Ireland where it can be effected. If your lordships ask me what becomes of the surplus stock of population, it is a matter on which I have, in very late journeys throughout Ireland, endeavoured to form some opinion; and I conceive, that in many instances they wander about the country as mere mendicants, but that more frequently they betake themselves to the nearest large towns, and there occupy, as lodgers, the most wretched hovels, in the most miserable outlets, in the vain hope of getting occasionally a day's work. Though this expectation too often proves unfounded, it is the only course possible for them to take. Their resort to these towns produces such misery as it is impossible to describe."

† Mr. Grey Porter's "Calm Observations on Irish affairs."

various heads, on the British government; but, according to a public allegation of the O'Connor Don, quoted in the Dublin Corporation debate, "any five British merchants waiting upon the minister to urge on his attention any public subject, would have more weight than the whole body of Irish representatives."

The effects of the Union are most visibly as well as painfully witnessed in the actual condition of the population. At the publication of the late census, the startling fact came out, that "whilst the addition to the population from 1821 to 1831 was about fourteen one-fourth per cent., the corresponding addition, from 1831 to 1841, was but five one-fourth per cent." The commissioners under whose direction the census was taken, appear to have persuaded themselves that this deficit was much more apparent than real. They suggest reasons for doubting the accuracy of the census of 1831, connected with the mode in which it was taken; and they observe, with respect to the preceding census, that "as it was the first successful occasion of enumerating the people of Ireland, it was, probably, effected with less perfect machinery." The census of 1831, however it was executed, presented no increase differing from that of other parts of the empire, or which was believed to have been usual in Ireland. The commissioners enter into speculations as to emigration, the army, and disease; but there was recruiting for the army previous to 1831, much emigration, and great pestilence; for, before that year, there was a visitation, in its effects far above the ravages of cholera. We would infer, the general accuracy of the census of 1831 from its *probability*, and to account for the falling off of the increase to the extent of nine per cent., or nearly seven hundred thousand human beings, on the supposed population of that year, will require something more than is to be found in the hypotheses of the commissioners. There has been a decrease of inhabited houses, but it is only three per cent., not nine; and it is but too plain, that houses, in the existing state of things, need not increase in the ratio of the increase of population in Ireland. The solution of the problem appears to us to be, very plainly, in the statement of the commissioners, that "nearly one-half of the families in the rural population, and somewhat more than one-third of the families of the civic population, are living in the lowest state, being possessed of accommodation equivalent to the cabin—consisting but of a single room." That which is called the "lowest state," is the "fourth class of accommodation," according to the division of misery made out by



the commissioners. There is a "third class," and the persons included are, confessedly, "but little removed in comfort, and nearly in the same proportion." The two classes embrace eighty-three per cent. in the rural districts, and in the civic districts seventy per cent.

It may be said that there was no better accommodation in the former decennial period; but in such a condition of a people, matters must have been growing worse, unless some new sources of employment of a very operative kind had been discovered. There is no evidence of any such relief; but indeed it signifies little what had formerly prevailed, if we find that in the latter period, to which what is considered an improved official investigation had been extended, eighty-three per cent. of the whole rural population, and seventy of the civic, were "in the lowest class of accommodation."

What effect "accommodation" has upon human life, the commissioners, in another place, inform us. "The remarkable difference in the duration of life in Leinster and Ulster, over Connaught and Munster, is," they say, "too striking to be overlooked. The latter are the most exclusively agricultural, and, from the analogy of Great Britain, should, on that account, seem likely to present the longest, rather than the shortest, average duration of existence. We fear, however, that the very low state, as to food and accommodation, of the rural population of those provinces, would be found, by a more searching inquiry and comparison to place them in a sanitary point of view, more nearly equal with the crowded inhabitants of the western parts of England and Scotland, rather than the healthy rustics of the English and Scotch agricultural counties."\*

The railroad commissioners have recorded their opinion, that the condition of the labouring population has deteriorated, a description of food being used amongst them which was not known at the commencement of the present century. Lord de Grey's commissioners

\* In Sir William Petty's time the people lived upon vegetables, milk, poultry, fish, and butter (though "rancid"). In Arthur Young's time, there was an abundance of potatoes, milk, and poultry. Sir William Petty said that every Irish peasant had a "garron," or small horse. According to the late census, there is in Leinster, to every second head of a family, (or to more than ten persons,) a horse or a mule; there is in Ulster and Munster, one such animal to about every third head of a family; and there is in Connaught, not one to every fourth head of a family. The total number of horned cattle would give about one to every head of a family; but of these what are the milch cows, and what is the use to the unfortunate peasantry after their superiors are served, and after the preparation of those masses of butter which are amongst the boasted exports?

on charities have certified, that there has been "an increase of population, without a corresponding increase of employment;" and that there is "a want of capital," and a "decay of manufactures."

Still there are persons who think they observe an improvement in the dress, and certain habitations along the high roads, of the Irish population. Dress has been cheapened, and landlords, who do nothing else, whitewash those habitations which afford fourth-class accommodation; but there is too much melancholy ground for the belief, that these effects are but "lights on graves." A no inconsiderable branch of the trade of England, and it is a modern one, is the exportation of *old clothes* for Ireland!\*

The *Irish* commissioners of inquiry into poor laws, calculated that 2,385,000 of the population are destitute for a great part of the year. The railway commissioners noted the decline of cotton manufacture in the only part of Ireland (Belfast) in which they had been established to any extent. They also noted the decline in the woollen manufacture in Dublin, and its decay also in Cork, Kilkenny, Moate, and Carrick-on-Suir; and they recorded that the flannel trade of Wicklow and Wexford "may be said to be extinct." Mr. Otway, in his report, in the hand-loom inquiry, has stated that the silk trade is now confined to one fabric—tabinets. "There can," he says, "be no doubt that the trade in weaving whole silk is extinct, and that the manufactures of velvets, handkerchiefs, and ribbons, are reduced to a few looms." On the linen trade there are conflicting statements; but its decay may justifiably be inferred from the general decay of the country, the withdrawal of the most effective encouragement of former times, and the rapid increase of the Scotch linen trade.†

\* A fact has turned up in the inquiries which so many Irishmen are now happily disposed to prosecute, as to the actual condition of Ireland. It has been ascertained by returns, that the sheep exhibited at the great October fair of Ballinasloe, are less numerous now than they were forty-five years ago. It has, however, been found that the exportation of sheep has been immensely increased. "The question," says the author of the *Argument for Ireland*, "naturally arises, what became of the surplus [not exported in 1799?] *They were eaten at home.*"

With regard to the assumed improvement in dress, it may be stated, that Mr. Willans, the well-known manufacturer, calculates that the consumption of woollens in Ireland, does not exceed, in annual value, £1,400,000, being about 3s. 3d. per head, on the population; whereas the total consumption of England cannot be less than from £18,000,000 to £20,000,000, which would amount to 20s. a head.

† The Scotch exports of linen during the year ended 31st of May, 1835, amounted in all to between sixty and seventy millions of yards, worth about from £1,550,000 to £1,600,000, being considerably greater than the entire exports from Ireland.—*M'Culloch's Statistical Account of the British Empire*, p. 675.

In 1830, a committee, of which Mr. Spring Rice was chairman, took some pains to show that there were symptoms of general improvement in Ireland. How vain the labour was, later authorities have attested; but while this committee was at its task, the venerated Dr. Doyle recorded, in the following words, his opinion of the actual state of a large portion of the population:—

“After their little capital is expended, they become dependant upon charity. They next give up their houses, and are obliged to take, not a room, but a corner. Four of these wretched families are sometimes accommodated in one small apartment of a cabin, and three in another. I have not, myself, seen so many as seven families in one of these cabins, but I have been assured, by one of the officiating clergymen, that there are many instances of it. Their beds are merely a little straw, spread at night on the floor; and by day wrapt up, or covered with a quilt or blanket. In these abodes of misery, disease is often produced by extreme want. Disease wastes the people, for they have no food or comforts to restore them. They die in a little time.”

Dr. Doyle specially alluded to the misery produced by the process of “clearing” lands. It remains unabated to the present hour; and there is not a fact to show that the sufferings of the poor, whether arising from this, or other causes, have, in the slightest degree, been mitigated.\*

We are assured by persons intimately acquainted with the state of the rural population, that the decay of Ireland is in no instance more perceptible, than the condition of that important class, once called “snug,” or “comfortable” farmers. Where there were a couple of horses, there is only a mule or an ass; where there were four or five cows, there is only a single cow; where there was animal food, three or four times a week, it is not enjoyed twice in a whole year. The

\* Since these pages were written, the Report of the Land Commission has been published. It supplies a most emphatic confirmation of all previous representations on this melancholy subject. It states, that the cottiers and labourers, in most parts of the country, are in want of certain employment. “It would be impossible,” say the commissioners, “to describe, adequately, the privations which they and their families habitually and patiently endure. In many districts, their only food is the potato, their only beverage, water. Their cabins are seldom a protection against the weather. A bed, or a blanket, is a rare luxury; and nearly in all, their pig and manure-heap, constitute their only property. The patient endurance which they exhibit, is deserving of high commendation, and entitles them to the best attention of government and parliament.”



stores of bacon, the butter, and even the feather-beds, are gone; and, still more deplorable, as indicating the effects on the labouring poor, there is not, we are assured, a back yard of a pawn-office, which does not, latterly, exhibit implements that ought to be employed in tilling the land! The pawn-office is the poor man's last resource; and, when it has his plough, his harrow, or his spade, it may well be said to have his only remaining deposit!

## CHAPTER IX.

## REPRESENTATIONS OF THE OPPONENTS OF REPEAL—SPEECH OF MR. SPRING RICE IN 1834.

MR. THOMAS SPRING RICE was joint secretary of the Treasury in 1834. To him was assigned the task of replying to the statement of Mr. O'Connell, in the April of that year, on the Repeal of the Union. As he was manifestly a chosen advocate, his speech may justly be supposed to have included every argument on his side, which could be advanced by an opponent of Repeal.

It would be impossible, in the limits prescribed to the present work, to deal with every topic introduced by Mr. Rice. The achievement would be needless, if it were practicable, for many points urged were irrelevant, or merely introduced *ad captandum*. We shall take the leading propositions, assuring the reader, that one shall not be omitted, which any intelligent person could believe, that Mr. Rice himself had deemed really important:—

1st proposition—There was a difference between Ireland and Portugal, and it placed England and Ireland in this strange and extraordinary position, that war might have been declared against Portugal, by the king of Ireland, while peace might have been maintained between Portugal and the king of England. 2nd—The regency question was one on which the weakness of the constitution of 1782 was demonstrated. 3rd—The Irish parliament was corrupt and subservient. 4th—Grattan denounced it in 1790. 5th—The terms of the Union might have been bad for Ireland, but they never were violated. 6th—No one can doubt the benefits which Scotland derived from her Union. 7th—Molyneux would have been satisfied if Ireland had representatives in the British parliament, and Montesquieu thought that a proportional share in the legislation of the superior country ought to be deemed sufficient. 8th—Mr. Foster anticipated separation. 9th—Mr. O'Connell, in 1825, wished to make the Union cordial and complete. 10th.—The rebellion was not fomented for the purpose of carrying the Union. 11th—There were one hundred and seventy-four commissions, or committees of inquiry, since the Union, dedicated to Irish affairs. 12th—Ireland has

obtained a free trade in corn, and a free scope has been given to commercial intercourse by a cross channel trade. 13th—The currency has been assimilated, and acts were passed for the encouragement of fisheries. 14th—A survey and valuation of Ireland are in progress, under the authority of the imperial parliament. 15th—Grants have been made for charities and other objects. 16th—The consolidation of the Exchequers was practically a relief to Ireland. 17th—All the land of Ireland is not mortgaged for the English debt. 18th—Ireland has been spared in stamp duties. 19th—The protecting duties have been repealed. 20th—The Irish debt was transferred to England. 21st—Exports, imports, shipping, and tonnage, prove the advancement of Ireland. 22d—Liverpool alone received an enormous amount of imports from Ireland in 1832. 23d—Prior to the Union, there was occasionally great distress in Ireland; Dr. Bindon complained of it in 1729, and another writer in 1757. 24th—New houses, to the number of three thousand two hundred and thirteen, have been built in Dublin since the Union. 25th—Moneys have been voted for wide streets in Dublin by the imperial parliament. 26th—Several parliamentary witnesses have deposed to the progress of Ireland since the Union. 27th—England has borne a large proportion of exclusive taxation. 28th—Mr. O'Connell was sophistical in the use he made of certain per-centage differences in the consumption of tea and other articles in the two countries, respectively. 29th—There have been transferences of stock, which attest the great progress of Ireland.

**FIRST PROPOSITION.**—The difference with Portugal arose from the refusal of the Portuguese government to receive the manufactures of Ireland, quantities of which were actually detained in the Custom-house at Lisbon. The merchants of Dublin petitioned the Irish parliament for redress, and the Irish parliament remonstrated with the English executive without effect. A tax on Portuguese wine was spoken of in the Irish House of Commons; and Sir Lucius O'Brien thought, that "granting the supplies for six months only would be the most likely method of bringing the business to a happy issue. He was sorry to see the business conducted in a timid manner, and in the hands of persons not interested in their welfare, who, at most, would only promote it, when it did not clash with the convenience of a neighbouring nation. He thought the parliament should enter into an immediate investigation of the subject."

These sentiments were expressed on the presentation of an address



from the Guild of Merchants of Dublin. On a subsequent occasion there was an animated debate on a motion, for going into the consideration of the Portuguese trade. Mr. Flood advised the house not to trust the minister. Mr. George Ponsonby, on the other hand, declared, that he saw the minister acting obviously for the honour and interest of Ireland; that he thought it his duty to support him, and that he would ever assist him while he acted on the same principle. The motion was negatived by a majority of one hundred and seventeen to forty-four. At length the parliament urged the interference of the crown, by an address to the king; and in his majesty's answer, which was communicated on the 5th of March, 1782, he applauded "the temper and moderation of his Commons on this occasion." "Such conduct," the answer said, "is always becoming of their prudence and wisdom, but particularly so in the present instance, as it affords time for further exertions towards bringing this business to a happy conclusion; and the House of Commons might rest assured that his majesty would persevere, in every possible effort, for the attainment of that desirable end."

The object was at last effected through the intervention of the crown; and it is somewhat difficult to imagine, how it could, at any time, have produced the state of things imagined by Mr. Rice. The Irish parliament might have laid an additional tax upon Portuguese wine, and the Irish people, generally, might have entered into a resolution, as the Volunteers did, not to drink Portuguese wine; but as to war, it was alone within the power of the sovereign, who was so far from suspecting his Irish parliament of having any disposition to interfere with his prerogative, that after admitting the just ground they had of complaint, he applauded them for their "temper and moderation." Even if it could be supposed possible that a war could grow out of an occasion of this kind, there would be nothing in it so unheard of, as Mr. Rice seemed to imagine; for it is well known that the elector of Hanover had been at peace, while the same personage as king of England had been at war. But the fancy is altogether extravagant. Peace or war is at the sole determination of the crown. A parliament cannot go to war, even in its enactments, without the assent of the sovereign; and the idea, that actual warfare could have emanated from a dispute of this sort, becomes ridiculous when it is considered that one of the parties belligerent had no command either of troops or ships!

2d.—The answer to the argument attempted to be founded on the

regency question, is already stated. The Irish parliament wanted to remove all chances of difference on that point; but the minister—for purposes which could not be misunderstood—would not suffer it to do so. Ten lines of a statute, which would have the support of every voice in Ireland, would render it as little a matter of question who should be regent, as who should be sovereign.

3d.—The Irish parliament was a long time enslaved, but it achieved its independence. It was, at periods, corrupted; and so, frequently, was the British parliament. It was, however, an unreformed parliament. For a long period it did not represent four-fifths of the whole population. In its best days it displayed energy and virtue, which have never been surpassed: in its worst there were not wanted the elements of great usefulness, with reference either to the present or the future.

4th.—It is somewhat singular to adduce Henry Grattan as a witness against the general character of the Irish parliament! He spoke as follows, it appears, on the 20th of February, 1790:—"What has our renewed constitution yet produced? A place bill? No. A pension bill? No. Any great or good measure? No. But a city police bill, a press bill, a riot act, great increase of pensions, fourteen new places for members of parliament, and a most notorious and corrupt sale of peerages. Where will all this end?"

This was Mr. Grattan's language in 1790, up to which time there was a failure of measures which had afterwards been accomplished. What, however, did he say on the 16th of January, 1800, which is a far more important date for our inquiry, than a period ten years preceding?—"I do not," said he, "mean to approve all the parliaments that have sat in Ireland. I left the former, because I condemned its proceedings. But I argue not, like the minister, from the misconduct of one parliament against the being of parliament itself. I value the parliamentary constitution by the average of its benefits; and I affirm, that the blessings procured by the Irish parliament in the last twenty years, are greater than all the blessings afforded by British parliaments to Ireland for the last century; greater even than the mischief inflicted upon Ireland by British parliaments; greater than all the blessings procured by those parliaments for their own country within that period. Within that time the legislature of England lost an empire, and the legislature of Ireland recovered a constitution."

5th and 6th.—A reply to both is to be found in the preceding chapter.

7th.—The opinion advanced by Molyneux was merely this, that Ireland should have representatives in the British parliament, if it were decided that the parliament of England ought to bind Ireland. His argument was, that the parliament of England ought not to bind Ireland, which was a separate and distinct kingdom, entitled to a parliament of its own; and it would seem to follow, that Ireland ought not to have representatives in the English parliament. Montesquieu spoke of proportional representation; and it is to be presumed that he would have thought it unjust that Ireland should have one hundred and five representatives, if grounds could be shown that she should have one hundred and sixty-nine. If our advance in wealth had been to the extent insisted upon by Mr. Rice, we should have two hundred representatives.

8th.—The use made of certain observations of Mr. Foster, in 1805, is of a piece with that made of Mr. Grattan's opinions, in 1790. "Should some score Catholics," said Mr. Foster, "by the vote of that night, find their way into the imperial parliament, and afterwards feel their inferiority in an assembly of six hundred and fifty-eight members, they would rapidly augment their strength by new political recruits, and endeavour, by a Repeal of the Union, to re-establish the Irish parliament. He felt the full force of the consequences to be apprehended from such a measure; and he trembled for the separation of his native country from that connection with England, deprived of which, he was convinced, she could be neither prosperous nor happy."

Mr. Foster was of that class of men, who, not knowing Catholics, or, yielding to early prejudices, misunderstood and feared them, and accordingly desired their exclusion from parliament. It does not follow that he approved of the Union. That measure was opposed by some few wrong-heads, on the ground of its supposed tendency to promote Catholic emancipation. Strenuously opposed as Mr. Foster was to the Union, if he had been allowed to select between that project and Catholic emancipation, it is not improbable that he would have taken the Union in preference. He thought that if Catholics had legislative power, they would seek for separation; and he would, as may be supposed, have avoided that evil, at all hazards. It could not have been the Repeal of the Union he was apprehensive in 1805, but the admission of Catholics to parliament; indeed, in his view, the Repeal would be a barrier to that admission, and a safeguard to the connection, under any circumstances. But suppose he was, in 1805, an entirely changed



man as to the abstract question of Repeal, what is he, as an authority, to Grattan, of whom we have the consolatory record, by his son, that he lived from the period of the Union, and died, a Repealer. Mr. Foster accepted the favours of place and the peerage from the authors of the Union.

9th.—Mr. O'Connell would always have embraced what he regarded a fair opportunity of making the Union cordial and complete. His demand was "justice for Ireland" in 1825; and he would have been satisfied with it then and later. If he now ask for a larger measure of "justice," it is after a nineteen years' experience, in which he had daily opportunities of judging of the probabilities or possibilities of a complete and cordial Union.

10th.—To suppose that the English government did *not* foment a rebellion, or had not (as some have expressed it) "suffered the rebellion to explode," in order to carry the Union, is only to suppose that they had not gone to the very extreme of political criminality on the occasion. Mr. O'Connell draws his conclusions on the subject from the following facts, elicited, in 1798, before the secret committee of the House of Commons:—"An armed organization was first commenced in Ulster, and was there alone successful to any extent. A meeting of nine colonels of the United Irishmen took place once a fortnight in the town of Ballinahinch, in the county Down—a place where a battle was fought afterwards. One of these colonels was found to be a double traitor—his name was Maguan. He had not only the rank of colonel, but was also a member of the county Down Directory, and besides of the Ulster chief Directory. He was a double-dyed traitor in not only holding these military and civil offices in the treasonable Union, but also by being a spy for the government, receiving bribes for the purpose of communicating intelligence to the Rev. Dr. Clelland, a Protestant divine, who was a magistrate in that district. This clergyman also acted as land-agent to Lord Londonderry, father to Lord Castlereagh. That traitor, Maguan, began his communications on the 14th of April, 1797; and at every meeting the colonels held he forwarded an account of the proceedings, and a list of the persons in attendance, to the Rev. Dr. Clelland, who forwarded them to the Castle. He also sent a full account of all the proceedings, as well of the meetings of colonels, as of the county and provincial committees, to the reverend gentleman, who regularly forwarded them to the Castle. He continued to give his information down to the latter end of May, 1798. The govern-

ment could, in the meantime, have laid hold of all the colonels, and also the members of committees if they chose to do so; they could have apprehended his eight military companions, captains, committee men, and others of the parties; and they could have put an end to the conspiracy. Why did they not do it? It was their solemn duty to have done it. In ordinary times they would have apprehended them all at once, and executed every man of them; and had it been done in that case much human blood would have been spared, which afterwards, unhappily, deluged the land."

Mr. Rice meets the case by stating, that "the *Habeas Corpus* act was suspended in 1796; the Insurrection act was passed; the White-boy acts were in force; and some of the founders and abettors of the Society of United Irishmen—Mr. Wolf Tone, Mr. Hamilton Rowan, Oliver Bond, and Colonel Butler—were proceeded against for high treason. Now what," he asks, "becomes of the charge of inertness made by the learned gentlemen against the government of that day? What greater vigour could he require?" The answer is—the arrest of one of the eight colonels—one of the numerous provincial and county committee men; any act, in short, which would testify that they availed themselves of the services of spy Maguan, which continued from April, '97 to May, '98. The public men of the time who had the best opportunities of observing and judging, were measureless in their accusations against the government. Mr. Plunket openly charged Lord Castlereagh with "fomenting the embers of a lingering rebellion; of hallooing the Protestant against the Catholic, and the Catholic against the Protestant; and of artfully keeping alive dissension for the sake of subjugation." This is Mr. O'Connell's impeachment with more circumlocution. The charge was advanced in all forms of guarded but perfectly intelligible phrase, by Bushe, Grattan, and many others. It was credited so universally out of this country, that it drew a formal vindication of his friends from Mr. Canning in the British parliament.

11th.—During the debate, Mr. Rice's speech was more than once, and with the utmost gravity, called "wonderful." It derived not a little of its attractions from a catalogue of one hundred and seventy-four committees, or commissions of inquiry, on Irish affairs, appointed since the Union.\* Some of those committees or commissions were useless, some mischievous; and many, which appear distinct, were

\* Appendix, No. I.

identical, the men who acted in one year being the same who acted in several years afterwards. The committees or commissioners on bogs may be cited as an instance. We find one or other introduced six times in the list; and yet we believe the true history of the bogs is, that there was one committee and one commission, and that though there were surveys and reports which cost £21,556, the whole work has been almost useless to the present hour, through the neglect of the parliament or the executive government. One, at least, of the numerous committees made it a part of its duty to reproach the men in authority with this cruel negligence. Of this committee Mr. Rice himself was chairman; and it remarked, in 1830, as follows:—“When the immense importance of bringing into a productive state five millions of acres, now lying waste, is considered, it cannot but be a subject of regret and surprise, that no greater progress in this undertaking has yet been made. If this work could be accomplished, not only would it afford a transitory but permanent demand for productive labour, accompanied by a corresponding rise of wages and improvement in the condition of the poor. . . . The severe pressure of the clearing of farms, and ejecting sub-tenants, may thus be mitigated, and the general state of the peasantry improved.”

Of these words Mr. Spring Rice himself was the pensman. They are very emphatic, and ought to have done good; but that they failed to produce any available impression on the parliament or the government, is a fact, attested by the representation of another committee—that which reported on public works, in 1835. Referring to the original reports of the bog commissioners, this committee remarked, that “these reports point out the advantages derivable to the state, the community, the labouring classes, and to England, from reclaiming the waste lands of Ireland, and are founded on the most convincing evidence of the facility with which such wastes may be reclaimed. But it appears, from the evidence obtained by your committee, that no efforts have been made to realize the advantages pointed out, except in a few instances. In these, however, the success has been most complete; and, therefore, present undeniable proofs of the practicability and importance of the operations proposed in the reports. . . . Unhappily for Ireland, and for the whole kingdom, it has not been heretofore considered sound policy to adopt any public measure towards the development of these extraordinary sources of wealth, or practically improving the Irish peasantry; and



hence that fine and fertile country presents such misery, discontent, and crime."

The "few cases" mentioned, are, with, perhaps, the single exception of King William's town, those of private individuals, with which the state had nothing whatever to do.

"Fisheries" are eight times set down in the catalogue; but there is nothing better now to be told of these sources of employment, than that the bounties are withdrawn, and they languish, while the Scotch fisheries are still carried on with vigour under a pecuniary encouragement, existing, in part, ever since the remote period of the Scotch Union.

The linen manufacture is twice mentioned. The last committee upon it was in 1825; and its members did all in their power to impress on the parliament and the executive government the expediency and justice of supporting this, which had been for more than a century pronounced in all public declarations, the "staple trade" of Ireland. They assumed, that the legislature was pledged ever since the time of William the Third, to continue the pecuniary grant to that trade; and they resolved, that "a fund being provided for the encouragement and advancement of the linen manufacture of Ireland, and legislative enactments for the regulation of that manufacture being necessary, together with officers appointed responsible for the execution thereof; some superintending authority is required to make due application of such fund, to control the conduct of such officers, to receive and decide upon the claims of those taking interest in promoting the manufacture, and in hearing and redressing the complaints of parties concerned or connected with the trade." They said, that "the trade having acquired a degree of advancement in the north, a most zealous attention ought to be exerted for the purpose of extending it to the other parts of Ireland." They recognised the "undoubtedly strong claims" of Ireland for every aid and encouragement to the manufacture, "at least to the extent of the annual parliamentary grant made and confirmed under circumstances detailed in a document in the Appendix."\* This document is a paper drawn up by the late Lord Oriel. It describes all the circumstances connected with the suppression of the Irish woollen trade, and shows that the assent of the Irish parliament was asked for, and procured, on the express condition, that the linen trade should perpetually be encou-

\* Appendix, No. II.

raged. This paper was published in the public journals of Dublin in 1815; and it is therefore to be supposed, that even then some measure of an injurious character, regarding the trade, was apprehended. The effect it produced, in 1825, on the minister, though it had the full sanction of what might have been regarded his own committee, for Sir George Hill appears to have been chairman, was of very short duration. The committee made their report in June of that year. The financial arrangements for 1825 were of course determined upon before that period, and there was no alteration in the usual grant, which, in Irish currency, was £21,000, and in British £19,938. It was voted again in 1826, and for the last time, to the old amount, in 1827. Then it was reduced to £10,000, and next year withdrawn altogether. It is a circumstance worth notice, that Lord Oriel took occasion to call attention to the fact, that the Irish linen trade was annually recommended from the throne to the attention of the Irish parliament. The speech, he observed, addressed to *the last* meeting of that parliament contained these words: "I recommend to your usual attention the agriculture, the manufactures, and particularly *the linen trade of Ireland*." The italics are Lord Oriel's. He proceeds to observe, that "although since the Union the linen manufacture has not been noticed in any speech from the throne, the same annual grant has been made for its support that was given by the parliament of Ireland." He could have had little anticipation that this grant would have been so speedily withdrawn, even in opposition to the earnest recommendation of one of those one hundred and seventy-four committees or commissions, on the strength of whose good works Mr. Rice demanded a verdict against the Repeal agitation of Ireland in 1834!

Education is introduced into the catalogue *nineteen* times, and grand juries *six* times. Yet how little was there of practical or real benefit rendered in the one case down to 1834; how little in the other to the present time? In short, if there had been *four* honest and efficient committees or commissions appointed since the Union, and if regard were paid to their recommendations, the *one hundred and seventy* additional ones might well have been dispensed with! However, the list, as we have it before us, is a good illustration of the materials of which the "wonderful speech" was composed.

12th.—The free trade in corn was an undoubted acquisition to Ireland. The country, we believe, was chiefly indebted for it to the persevering exertions of Sir John Newport. It must be admitted,

however, that it was just such a measure as was most incumbent on the united parliament to pass, whether viewed in reference to the prices of food in England, or the growing deficiency of employment in Ireland, arising, in a great measure, from the act of Union itself. Besides, it opened no source of advantage to Ireland at all comparable to the new opportunities acquired by Great Britain of making a monopoly for her manufactures. But the corn trade is not now in the condition in which it was in 1834; and we know not how soon a "monopoly of the English market" (as it has been called), which has already been considerably impaired, may vanish altogether. No revulsion, however, has overtaken, or appears to threaten, the British advantages arising from free commercial intercourse with Ireland. There is no doubt that the preponderance of the benefits connected with the "cross channel" trade, has always been at the side of Britain.\*

13th.—The assimilation of the currency rendered much benefit to England; on Ireland it conferred no proportionate advantage; and many mourn over it to the present day, as a great grievance. The fishery question is already disposed of.

14th.—There has been a survey and valuation of Ireland; but without such services how could it be shown to the people, that there was any good whatever in legislation or government? When this undertaking was followed up to the consideration of an ordinance memoir, what occurred? There was a junction of parties connected with Ireland, and as respectable a deputation as could approach a minister, waited on Sir Robert Peel, but he refused his assent to the expenditure of a few thousands, though the result would, at so small a sacrifice, have been highly gratifying to *all* classes of the Irish people. No transaction more confirmatory of the observation of the O'Connor Don, could possibly occur.†

\* The creation of a corn trade for Ireland was the work of the Irish parliament. Under the fostering encouragement of domestic legislation, the Irish became exporters instead of importers of corn, and made rapid progress even before the period of legislative independence, notwithstanding difficulties thrown in their way by the "commercial avarice" (to borrow a phrase from Newenham) "of England." The number of mills from which flour was brought to Dublin was thirty-three in 1768; but they were two hundred and nineteen in 1796. The great prosperity of this branch of commerce commenced with the bounties of 1784. "Contrary to what had ever before been the case, Ireland," says Newenham, "gained, by her corn trade, in ten years, (ended 1795,) a balance of £4,042,811, or about £404,281 a year; and contrary, also, to what had been the case before, plenty uniformly prevailed in the country."

† Page 77.



15th.—Grants were undoubtedly made for charities and other objects, but there was a provision to that end in the act of Union. The stipulated amount had, in some cases, been exceeded; but was this more than should be expected in the case of a country which had been taxed so much beyond its means? England has had grants for similar objects; and they have amounted to nearly double the sum of the Irish, without a tenth of the necessity. Besides, the heaviest items of the “grants” have rendered no real service to the country, but have carried out, as far as they could, merely a pernicious purpose of the fanaticism of former times. For several years the Protestant Charter Schools have received £41,540 a year; the Foundling Hospital, upwards of £32,000 a year; and the Society for Discountenancing Vice, £9,000 a year.\* What good did this render to Ireland? what good was it intended to render? The “Education Society” expended from £30,000 to £37,000 a year, in pursuits which have caused divisions and discontents, creating more evil in one year, than could be counterbalanced by all the good they were capable of effecting in twenty. The Board of First Fruits received out of these boasted “grants,” for seven years, £55,385, making a total, in these seven years alone, of £650,766; the purposes being, in many instances, to provide for the repairs of glebes, where there were no resident clergymen, and churches, where there were no congregations. Of the whole “grants,” amounting to £8,638,331, nearly one-half were for objects of this description.

There were, besides, loans amounting to £6,953,545, of which £2,804,083 had been repaid. Of the re-payment of every shilling of these advances, no doubt ever was, or could be, entertained; but of what did they principally consist? Some were for the same “first fruits” just mentioned, others for tithe objects, but the principal were for gaols, and “police purposes,” rendered needful principally by bad government. Of the whole amount no less a sum than £4,174,000 was for gaols and police purposes.

16th.—This is a very large question; but all that we would desire

\* It is worthy of remark, that the bounty of the Imperial parliament to these institutions, exceeded that of the Irish parliament:—

Voted by the Irish Parliament.				Voted by the Imperial Parliament.			
For Protestant Charter Schools,	..	..	£13,000	..	..	£41,540	
Foundling Hospital,	..	..	9,300	..	..	32,000	
Society for Discountenancing Vice,	..	..	..	..	..	9,000	
First Fruits,	..	..	5,000	..	..	55,385	

in this place to advance regarding it, has already been stated. To show how utterly unfounded the assertion is, that the consolidation of the Exchequer was "practically a relief to Ireland," it need only be mentioned, that the utmost shilling was exacted from Ireland before that arrangement, and that the utmost shilling has been exacted since—a state of things from which it is impossible that relief could flow. Ireland was promised an abatement of taxation, a restriction on the accumulation of debt, increased encouragement to her manufactures, and, above all, an application (contingently) of a surplus of her own revenue, even to the extent of £5,000,000, to Irish purposes, exclusively. She has been grievously disappointed as to the taxation, as to debt, as to manufactures, and as to the surplus revenue applicable to her own uses. A measure which should be an emanation of her increase of wealth, and the fostering care of the governing power, has had no better foundation than her poverty, and yet the result is said, by Mr. Rice, to be "practically a relief to Ireland." Whatever else has happened, Ireland *could* not, under such circumstances, have been relieved.

17th.—"All the land of Ireland is *not* mortgaged for the English debt." Such was the assertion of Mr. Rice; and he proceeded to say (page 60 of an authorized report),—

"As we are at issue on this important fact, I desire that you (the House of Commons), the jury appointed to judge between us, should understand the issue you are about to try, and respecting which I put myself upon the country, and claim your verdict. The question is, whether the imperial parliament passed an act, in 1816, which repealed any protection which Ireland had derived from the articles of Union, and encumbered Ireland with an additional weight of debt. You are to decide whether that statement be true or false—whether the imperial parliament is guilty—whether all the land and industry of Ireland is now mortgaged for the payment of the national debt."

The only question which we propose to deal with here is, "whether all the land and industry of Ireland is now mortgaged for the payment of the national debt." From the words quoted it is to be supposed that Mr. Rice will be able to show in his usual "triumphant" manner, that there has been no such mortgage as that suggested. Let us then see what he admits, in page 62 of this authorized publication.

"It is perfectly true," he observes, "that by this arrangement *all* the revenue and *all* the expenditure (of both countries) become one joint amount."

And again, in page 64:—

“It is quite true that the taxation and revenue of Ireland are subject to the payment of the interest of the debt; but let it be remembered, that so are the land and the national resources of Great Britain likewise.”

So much for the point on which the “jury” were so confidently called upon to pronounce. The case put to the “jury” was, that there was *no* “mortgage,” and it was sustained by the admission that there *was* a “mortgage!”

18th.—Mr. Rice made special use of the inequality of the stamp taxation, which he was able to refer to in 1834:—“The argument against me is, that in matters of taxation parliament has acted most unjustly towards Ireland. I refer, as a triumphant reply, to the rates of stamp duties levied in that part of the empire, and I beg honourable gentlemen to attend to my statement. I do not know on what principle it can be argued that the estate of a man who dies worth £1,000, in the one portion of the empire, is not as fair a subject of taxation, as if he resided in the other. Now, let us see how great has been the difference of taxation levied in Great Britain and Ireland, in this respect. It will be seen that this unjust, partial, and iniquitous British parliament, in making its fiscal arrangements, has imposed a duty of one hundred per cent. less on legacies in Ireland than in England. The stamp duty on deeds in Ireland is eighty per cent. less than in England; on probates, fifty per cent.; on administrations, one hundred and twenty per cent.; on receipts, sixty-five per cent.; on newspapers, one hundred per cent.; on almanacs, sixty per cent.; on fire insurance, twenty per cent.; and on advertisements, fifty per cent. less than in England. Why, sir, I say that with these simple facts before us, it is as preposterous and absurd as it is untrue to imagine or assert, that the interests of Ireland have been neglected. I admit that I cannot justify many of these preferences. Suppose that a man were to die in Ireland, leaving an immense mass of property; suppose that the great capitalist who had died lately in this country—I mean Mr. Adair—had been a resident in Ireland, and had died in that country, what an enormous inequality would this one hundred per cent. have been in such a case; and why it should have been allowed to exist I know not, except for the advancement of the interest of Ireland, and from a wish to benefit that country; no other motive could have induced the legislature to



impose a duty upon legacies in Ireland, less by one hundred per cent. than that which is levied in England."

All this was put to the jury in 1834, and what is its value when we examine it in 1844? A desire for the "advancement of Ireland" caused the wondrous differences stated of the legacy duty. Well, they are now removed, and what are we to say as to the cause—what are the "jury" to say as to the cause? Are they to find that the "prosperity of Ireland" was the sole object in view; and are they, by thus finding, to exonerate "this unjust, partial, and iniquitous British parliament" from all blame? How evanescent is human glory! If Mr. Rice had been destined by the Fates to speak the "wonderful speech" in 1844, one of its finest points would be lost through the untimely interference of Mr. Goulburn with the testamentary regulations of persons of the Adair class—one of whom has not yet been found in Ireland, but whose utmost payments after all, whether the duty be one hundred per cent. over, or one hundred per cent. less, can amount to not a great many thousands of pounds. Never, surely, was the authority of statistics so utterly prostituted as in the whole of this passage, in the great oration of Mr. Rice; he even condescended to drag in the newspapers. He is not correct in his statement of the difference of the taxation under this head, existing in 1834, for it was *not* one hundred per cent.; there having been a large discount on payments in England which was unknown in Ireland: but suppose the per-centage was four hundred, instead of one hundred, what would Ireland have gained, or England lost? not £10,000 in a whole year. If the case, however, were totally different in 1834, what, we would ask, is now to be done with a "jury" empannelled on these questions? The stamp duties have since been assimilated, with the insignificant exception of the newspapers. There are no Adairs, now, to rejoice in the advantages of making a will in Ireland. The farthing bounty to the newspapers may be estimated by this fact, that it is doubtful whether the whole revenue of Ireland, arising from newspapers, is as much as £20,000 a year over the expenses of the collection.

19th.—As to the protecting duties, their repeal was chiefly important to the wealthier country; that repeal was most popular amongst all the trading interests of Great Britain; it was opposed by the principal manufacturers of Ireland, but to no purpose. It has, unquestionably, been attended with the ruin of a great number of our once prosperous establishments.

20th.—With regard to the “transference of the debt,” we have a self contradiction, only equalled by that in the case of the land “mortgage.” When a debt is “transferred,” it is ordinarily supposed to be shifted from one party to another; but Mr. Rice, himself, states that “the taxation and revenue of Ireland are subject to the interest of the debt;” and this is what he calls “a transference of the burden!” Calmly viewing it, such an attempt at reasoning is amazing, but it only elicited exclamations of “wonderful speech” in the imperial House of Commons.

21st.—The export, import, and tonnage-tests require a little examination. There is great fallacy connected with all of them. Exports may be in provisions, which (as in the case of Ireland) the people are too poor to consume themselves. England once exported provisions, and her corn was received, in considerable quantities, into Ireland. She could not now be an exporting country, in the same way, without a great decline in the comfort and wealth of her inhabitants. Even increase of imports might arise from adverse circumstances, and the case of Ireland is one, again, in point. We import now a great amount of articles which we manufactured formerly. This is a proof, not of the improvement, but of the deterioration of the condition of the country. Tonnage, also, is a most uncertain test. It means, only, the capacity of ships to transport commodities. The tonnage of vessels coming to Ireland with coals, and intending to take back the value in money, is recorded. The tonnage of the same vessels taking back the money and the mud,—which is the usual returned cargo, at least from the Liffey,—is recorded. The tonnage of the steam vessels sailing with half cargoes, and quarter cargoes, and sometimes no cargoes at all,—as far as merchandize is concerned,—is recorded. Tonnage, therefore, is no test to be relied upon. Newcastle, by means of its collieries, makes a greater figure in the tables of tonnage, than places three times surpassing it in real mercantile importance.

22d.—In the suggestion, that Liverpool “alone” accomplished what is described, there is one of the most prominent examples of the sophistry which pervades the whole speech. The phrase, “alone,” suggests that all other ports receive a great, if not equal, amount of the Irish exports; but the fact is, that Liverpool, from her position, and the nature of the principal exports, receives into her harbour at least nine-tenths of the entire.

23d.—Before the Union there was (wonderful to relate) distress in Ireland, and more especially in the city of Dublin! It could not have been otherwise, if Mr. Pitt was correct in stating, in the debates on the '85 propositions, that "Ireland had been deprived of the use of her own resources, and rendered subservient to the interest and opulence of Great Britain." There was, it is true, an interval of parliamentary independence, but it could be no security against those visitations from which even opulent England suffers occasionally. But has nothing happened in Dublin, since the Union, to cause some disappointment? Let the question be answered by the following extract from a report of one of those numerous parliamentary committees arrayed against the Repealers:—

"In closing their labours, continued during the three last sessions, and rendered necessary by a greater number of petitions than were addressed by the city of Dublin to parliament, on any former occasion, your committee feel an earnest hope that the peculiar situation in which Dublin has been placed by the Union, will not be lost sight of by the house. Prior to that event ninety-eight peers, and a proportionate number of wealthy commoners, inhabited the city. At present, the number of the resident peers does not exceed twelve. The effect of the Union has been thus to withdraw from Dublin many of those who were likely to contribute most effectually to its opulence and importance. The increase of the industrious, and of the middle classes, so desirable under these circumstances, is checked by the aggravated pressure of the local taxation. A house, which, in 1797, paid in local taxes £6 4s. 0d., is now subject to £30, while the value of the property has been reduced 20 per cent. One-fourth of the number of houses in the city is returned as insolvent, and while the population has augmented, between the years 1813 and 1821, from 176,610 to 185,821, the number of the inhabited houses diminished from 15,104 to 14,949."

The report from which this is an extract is dated the 18th of May, 1825; and the author is Mr. Thomas Spring Rice, now Lord Monteagle!

24th.—There have, unquestionably, been many houses built in Dublin since the Union, but a far greater number have fallen into decay. All the buildings indicating unquestionable opulence were, for the most part, erected before the Union; but the point as to the real effects upon Dublin is decided by the quotations just made from



Mr. Rice himself. "One-fourth of the houses were insolvent; and though the population had increased, the number of inhabited houses had diminished from 15,104 to 14,949."\*

25th.—Moneys were, certainly, voted for wide streets; and these grants were at one time defended by Sir Robert Peel, when he was chief secretary of Ireland, on the ground of the local injury to Dublin, which was unquestionably caused by the Union. All payments for wide streets have ceased for many years, and yet remittances have constantly been made of the funds administered by the Board of Woods and Forests, amounting to £62,000 a year, and they have principally been applied to the improvement of London.

26th.—That parliamentary witnesses have made no case, has already been proved in several ways. There are, certainly, more exports and imports than there were in 1800; but the population has been doubled, and we have shown what sort of test is to be found in exports and imports. It is undeniable that there has been some advance under most heads; but the case of the Repealers is, that there has been no advance at all proportionate to the increase of population, to the improvement of Ireland before the Union, or to the improvement of the other parts of the empire since the Union. The conclusive fact is, that the average of the gross revenue in three years ended 1804, was only £4,420,438; and that in three years ended 1844, it was £4,160,934, notwithstanding the enormous advance in the ratio of the taxation.†

27th.—There was no topic introduced by Mr. Rice that appeared to make so strong an impression as the amount of separate taxation paid by Great Britain since the Union. He dealt with it before in a speech delivered on the 11th of February, 1833, and of which an

\* The Mr. Ellis, M.P. for Dublin, gave the following statement to a parliamentary committee in 1822, to exhibit the "progressive insolvencies" of Dublin:—

Insolvent Houses in	1815	..	880
" "	1816	..	1,072
" "	1817	..	1,588
" "	1818	..	2,397
" "	1819	..	3,206
" "	1820	..	3,989
" "	1821	..	4,719

† The revenue, in 1804, was increased by an amount of assessed taxes reaching to £208,815, not at present payable in Ireland; but, on the other hand, the produce of the revenue from tea, tobacco, and sugar, was £957,000 greater in the year ended 5th January, 1844, than it was in the former year, the difference being chiefly caused by the increase of the rates.

authorized report was extensively circulated. From that speech the following is an extract:—

“The members who attack England for her conduct towards Ireland, do not recollect *the separate taxation which England has paid, and still pays*. From all the taxes which have pressed, and still press, most severely upon England, Ireland not only claims, but enjoys an exemption. I will state to the house some facts which will show the extent to which this separate taxation of Great Britain has proceeded. England paid for the—

“ Tax on property and income from 1801	.. ..	£152,258,710
Produce of land and assessed taxes from 1823, when	.. ..	
those taxes were repealed in Ireland,	.. ..	50,120,425
Beer, .. ..	.. ..	82,483,583
Soap, .. ..	.. ..	24,934,544
Candles, .. ..	.. ..	10,294,980
Printed cottons, .. ..	.. ..	13,549,609

Making a total of separate taxation on Great Britain of £333,641,851

“In referring to these facts, I am not arguing against my country, for I believe that I am not a worse Irishman in endeavouring to do justice to the conduct of the people of England. It would, I admit, have been unwise and unjust in the imperial parliament to have imposed heavier taxes upon Ireland; but, at the same time, I will contend, that the fact of not having done so, must be taken as a proof of regard for Irish interests.”

In returning to the topic in 1834, he took higher ground. Instead of a total of £333,000,000, he claimed under the head of taxes levied in Great Britain, exclusively, “£478,000,000, and he added £618,000,000 more as “excess of taxation levied in Great Britain by reason of the difference of taxes.” The following are the items under both heads:—

Excess of Taxation.			
Customs,	...	...	£130,065,000
Excise,	...	...	321,346,642
Stamps,	...	...	86,638,000
Taxes,	...	...	80,237,406
			£618,287,048

Taxes levied exclusively.			
Excise,	...	...	£211,936,477
Stamps,	...	...	20,000,000
Taxes,	...	...	246,239,947
			478,176,424

Grand total, £1096,463,472

Such was the progress Mr. Rice made in computation in a single year! He produced in one a total of £763,000,000 above the other!!!

There were “papers relating to the income, expenditure, and trade of Ireland,” laid before parliament in 1834, on the motion of Mr. Rice.\* From these he professed to take his figures. There does

\* Sessional number 194.

not appear to have been very great accuracy employed in the compilation of these papers. Mr. Rice, himself, noticed that the duties on salt were “twice” charged; but he did not remark that salt and hops were set down as articles taxed exclusively in Great Britain, though a clause in the act of Union specially exempts them from a greater amount of duty than that to which they were then liable. These two articles made a difference of £40,320,110 in Mr. Rice’s calculation of exclusive taxation.

The next thing observable is, that there are no *data* in these papers, from which such a result can be deduced as that exhibited by Mr. Rice; there are no minor amounts from which he can make out his grand total of £1096,000,000.

The following are items of exclusive taxation recapitulated in page twenty-eight, salt and hops being omitted :—

Beer, ... ..	£91,252,592
Bricks and tiles, ... ..	10,854,967
Candles, ... ..	11,891,684
Cider and perry, ... ..	821,212
Glass (exclusive of bottles), ... ..	14,623,952
Printed calicoes, ... ..	40,358,465
Soap, ... ..	32,441,797
Starch, ... ..	2,210,779
Stone bottles, ... ..	67,132
Wire, ... ..	267,419
	<hr/>
	£204,789,999

In page 32 we have the following recapitulation :—

Land tax, ... ..	£43,497,297
Income tax, ... ..	9,613,991
Aid and contribution, ... ..	67,892
Property tax, ... ..	145,833,019
1s. 6d. and 4s. duties ... ..	2,094,204
	<hr/>
	£201,106,403

There is no other item of exclusive taxation, except one of £45,133,000 for assessed taxes, and another of £20,000,000 for stamps. The following, then, are the amounts of exclusive taxation under each head :—

1st ... ..	£204,789,999
2nd ... ..	201,106,403
3rd ... ..	45,133,544
4th ... ..	20,000,000
	<hr/>
	£471,029,946

This does not differ very materially from Mr. Rice’s total, though we have excluded salt and hops; but we cannot see our way at all



through the maze in which we are involved by items for “difference of rates.” Of the first of these we find an abstract in page twenty-five, where it is said that certain articles produced a revenue of £24,179,000 in Ireland; but would have yielded a sum of £64,115,000, “if the rates of duty had been the same as in great Britain.” The balance is £39,936,000, which, we suppose, we are to charge against Ireland.

The next class of articles, on which an estimate is founded, presents itself in page twenty-nine. On auctions, glass, hides and skins, malt, paper, spirits, and vinegar, it is assumed that there has been an “excess of taxes” amounting to £81,367,000.

In page thirty-two we have an excess of assessed taxes, amounting, “at a rough estimate,” to £80,237,000, and an annual amount of assessed taxes raised in England, since the repeal of the assessed taxes in Ireland, reaching to £45,133,000. In the same page there is set down, “upon the best estimate that can be formed,” £81,697,000 for difference of stamp rates. We have now the entire of the amounts, and let us see their total:—

1st item, ... ..	£39,936,641
2nd do., ... ..	81,367,047
3rd do., ... ..	80,237,406
4th do., ... ..	45,133,544
5th do., ... ..	81,697,000
	<hr/>
	£328,371,638

Add the entire amount of the hops and salt taxes, and the total will be £368,000,000. Add that again to the preceding total of £471,000,000, and there will be a grand total of £839,000,000; but this will not be Mr. Rice’s sum of £1,096,000. Where shall we find the difference? There are assuredly no items for it in these papers. We observe that customs are mentioned in the speech, though they are not included in these tables. But the credit taken on their account still leaves us to guess how Mr. Rice’s grand total has been made out. We have, we think, a clue to the enigma in page twenty-nine, where *amounts are united which ought to be kept separate*. In page twenty-eight a credit of £245,110,108 is claimed for taxes on articles in Great Britain not subject to duty in Ireland. This amount is, of course, comprehended in the statement of the taxes levied in Great Britain exclusively. But on the opposite page we have an amount of “excess of taxes” arising from a difference of rates, and there is added the preceding total of

£245,110,108. It is plain that this sum is “twice” set down in the account, as well as the salt duty.

There is no evidence that it entered into the head of Mr. Rice, in 1833, to claim any thing for these “estimated excesses of taxation;” and it must be confessed that the scheme is one of unequalled extravagance. It is founded on the absurd hypothesis, that results in taxation are proportioned to the magnitude of the rates charged. Here is the article of malt: it paid a higher duty in England than Ireland up to 1815. We will suppose that it produced, in fifteen years, altogether £60,000,000; but if the rates had been as low as the Irish, the supposition of Mr. Rice is, that it would have produced only £30,000,000. If the rates, however, had been low, the greater likelihood is, that the produce would still be £60,000,000, or even more, contributing both to the indulgence of the people, and the profit of the Exchequer. It is, then, perfectly idle to “estimate,” or at all events, to set down in absolute figures, what the effect would be if the rates had been of higher or smaller magnitude than they were. A computation in such a case is peculiarly preposterous in the instance of Ireland. We have mentioned the duties on certain articles imported. It was £24,179,000. The rates were lower than the English; but if they had been as high, £64,115,000 would have been realized according to Mr. Rice. On this ground he claims a credit for England of £39,936,000, being the balance between what was received, and what might have been received, as he supposes, through means of high rating. Experience, however, has shown in Ireland that the £24,179,000 might have been reduced to £20,000,000, instead of being augmented to £64,115,000, by such a process, leaving England to claim nothing for her generosity to the weaker country, and diminishing her own income into the bargain. The rates are now nearly all assimilated; and if they had been so from the beginning, it is most certain that the produce of the revenue would, on the whole, have been less. England, in point of fact, served her own interests by the moderation of the Irish rates; and Mr. Rice has no right to make it an item of charge against Ireland, or of credit for England, to the extent of £618,000,000, or of £1,000,000.

However, there can be no disputation, it will be said, about the exclusive taxation. Whatever may be urged against the hypothesis as to malt, no sophistry can fritter away the importance of the amount of revenue raised by the property tax, the beer, candle, and

other exclusive taxes of England; this is very true, but there was a sufficient reason why these taxes should be exclusive. At the time of the Union the interest on the debt of Great Britain (funded and unfunded) was £16,566,000; this the act of Union bound England to provide for by separate taxation. Up to 1834 the liabilities of her separate debt would have required, from England, a separate taxation, amounting, in the aggregate, to £563,244,000, which exceeds Mr. Rice's estimate of exclusive taxation by £85,000,000! To this extent had England fallen short of her equitable engagements, on the score of separate taxation up to 1834. The deficit has greatly increased since that time, and even making a large allowance for "excess of rates," England has not come up to the obligations imposed upon her by debt alone. Every year in which separate taxation is under £16,566,000, is a year of under payment with reference merely to the equitable responsibilities of the English debt.

Mr. Rice's arguments on this subject, cut two ways. He has adduced his millions to show that a great regard has been paid to Irish interests. His illustrations relate, principally, to the time past; and if they be good for that purpose, they exhibit a great indifference to the future. All exemptions and modifications were benefits derived directly from the Irish parliament; and in proportion to their former magnitude must be the grievance, that they had so soon been lessened or discontinued under the new system. How long it was since England had been burdened with the principal items of separate taxation, will be seen by the following statement:—

Tea tax, ...	...	Assimilated in 1814
Sugar tax, ...	...	Assimilated in 1814
Wine tax, ...	...	Assimilated in 1814
Tobacco tax, ...	...	Assimilated in 1814
Coffee tax, ...	...	Assimilated in 1814
Foreign spirits' tax, ...	...	Assimilated in 1814
Malt tax, ...	...	Assimilated in 1815
Property tax, ...	...	Repealed in 1816
Customs' duties, ...	...	Assimilated in 1822
Spirit tax, as to Scotland	...	Assimilated in 1823
Hides and skins' tax, ...	...	Assimilated in 1825
Paper tax, ...	...	Assimilated in 1825
Salt tax, ...	...	Repealed in 1825
Vinegar tax, ...	...	Assimilated in 1826
Cider and perry tax, ...	...	Assimilated in 1826
Bottle tax, ...	...	Assimilated in 1828
Glass tax, ...	...	Assimilated in 1828
Beer tax, ...	...	Repealed in 1830
Printed cotton tax, ...	...	Repealed in 1831
Candle tax, ...	...	Repealed in 1832

It appears from the above, that for twenty years Ireland had not



known some of the most important exemptions she enjoyed under her own parliament. Could any reason be shown why Ireland was better able to dispense with an exemption when Mr. Rice made his speech, than she was in 1814, or at any other time since the Union?

It is right to direct attention to the annexed table, as furnishing a proof of the looseness with which Mr. Rice's figures were put together. It contrasts amounts set down by Mr. Rice, himself, in 1833, with amounts recorded by the same authority in 1834:—

	Speech of 1833.	Speech of 1834.
Property and income tax, ...	£152,258,710 ...	£155,546,010
Beer, ... ..	82,483,583 ...	91,252,592
Candles, ... ..	10,294,980 ...	11,891,684
Soap, ... ..	24,934,544 ...	32,441,797
Printed cottons, ... ..	13,549,609 ...	40,358,465

How are we to account for these discrepancies, or is there any faith at all to be placed in Treasury statistics? All the taxes enumerated, but one, were repealed before 1833; that single tax (soap) did not average more than a million and a half a year; and, therefore, the receipt of one year could not have caused the total rate to swell from about £25,000,000 to £32,000,000. Every thing considered, it would be difficult to imagine a weaker case than was made with reference to this great point of relative taxation; and, nevertheless, it manifestly appeared to the mass of Mr. Rice's hearers, as the most conclusive and irresistible effort of his six hours' reasoning.

28th.—When Mr. O'Connell indulges in *his* calculations, he is met by a cavil of rather a singular character. The learned gentleman undertook to compare the state of Ireland before the Union with her state after, and for this purpose he used tables which are to be found in the "Summary Report" on the state of the Irish, issued in 1830. The results shown by these tables Mr. O'Connell stated in detail, and Mr. Rice thus dealt with them:—

"I must here advert to a fallacy in a part of the learned member's statement which I am bound to confute, because it seemed to be well calculated to produce a delusive impression on the public mind. [After stating the points put by Mr. O'Connell.] Now, this is a most sophistical mode of reasoning the case, and I undertake to prove that it contains within itself the grossest of all fallacies. It may, to a certain extent, be just to compare the consumption of Ireland at one period with its consumption at another; but to make a per-centage

average of the consumption of one country as compared with that of another, can lead to no useful result whatever. It practically proves nothing. Allow me to put a simple case to illustrate my principle. Let me suppose that one community consumes in a given year ten quarters of wheat, and another consumes one thousand quarters within the same period; and that in the following year the consumption of the first community increases to twenty quarters, and that of the second community, to fifteen hundred quarters—what is the result of these proportions? In one community the consumption has increased to one hundred per cent, and in the other only to fifty per cent., though in the latter case no less than five hundred quarters of wheat had been added to the consumption, while, in the first, an addition of only ten quarters had taken place. Is it not plain, then, that the relative proportions, as ascertained by per-centage, proves but little in reference to the state of these countries. But dismissing this example, a more agreeable illustration is suggested by the hour, to which the present discussion has, unfortunately, been protracted. I take, as an example, the consumption of wine. Suppose that one community consumes a single hogshead of wine, and that another community consumes ten thousand hogsheads; and that in the following year the first community has increased its consumption from one to two hogsheads, and the second community has increased its consumption to fifteen thousand hogsheads. In the former case, the consumption is augmented in the ratio of one hundred per cent., while, in the latter, it is augmented in the ratio of fifty per cent. Yet it cannot be seriously doubted, but that the addition of five thousand hogsheads to the consumption of a community, is a greater indication of wealth and prosperity than the addition of a single hogshead. If I have been enabled to make myself intelligible on this subject, the learned member is put out of court as far as relates to his doctrines of ratio of consumption. The house will observe, that in such an argument every thing depends on the point of departure, upon which the applicability of this reasoning depends.”

One would scarcely think that Mr. Rice has been all this while speaking of calculations founded on his own tables. He was the author of the “Summary Report” alluded to. We insert the tables in the Appendix, that they may more easily be referred to.\* They show the quantities of the articles to which they relate consumed in

\* Appendix, No. III.

Great Britain and Ireland, in each year, within the long range from 1784 to 1827—a period not far from half a century. For what could these tables have been originally compiled? To prove what Mr. O'Connell wanted to establish, or the reverse? Mr. O'Connell wanted to show that there was great progress before the Union, as compared with the state of things after. He compared, not only Ireland with Ireland, but Ireland with Great Britain. There was progress, with two exceptions, after, as well as before, the Union. But there are *rates* of progress, and this was a case in which it was essential to take them into account. It was necessary to Mr. O'Connell's argument, not only to show that the increase of the consumption was more rapid in the first period than the second, but to what extent it was more rapid. This could be done in no possible way, but by the "per-centages" he employed. The case was not the fanciful one of one community, that got a single hogshead of wine in one year, and another, that got ten thousand; the first hogshead being followed in the next year by a second, and the ten thousand being succeeded by five thousand more, both communities being unheard of afterwards, and necessarily out of the reach of comparison, whether the hogsheads were many or few; but it was the case of two countries, using quantities not only of one commodity, but several, and using them year after year, for three and forty years. If ever "per-centages" could fairly be introduced, it is in an instance of this kind; yet see what sort of exception Mr. Rice took to them after he had done with his imaginary tables of taxation—bringing out results of hundreds of millions: totals exceeding, as he himself said, "the whole amount of the national debt."

29th.—Mr. Rice relies upon stock transferences as proving the rapid increase of Ireland in the accumulation of capital. Dividends are paid in Dublin on such portion of the government stock as belongs to Irish residents. A power of transferring stock to and from London, was created by act of parliament several years ago, to open an obviously convenient mode of remittance to both countries. In every year, as the public amounts show, transferences more or less considerable take place. In the last year the transference from London to Dublin was so large as £1,540,373; the transference from Dublin to London was £516,578; and there is now a sum of £36,595,000, funded property belonging to Irish residents, on which dividends are payable in Dublin. When the power of transference was created, the sum upon which dividends were payable in Dublin,



was about £20,000,000; and, as this sum has been augmented to the amount just stated, it follows that the funded capital of Ireland has been increased, in the interval, to an extent exceeding £16,000,000. It is impossible to say how much of the balance was property created *since* the power of transference was obtained. It is to be supposed that persons resident in Ireland were owners to some extent of English funded property, before they could receive their dividends in Dublin; and this appears to be the more likely, from the circumstance, that the largest transferences were in the earliest years. But there is no doubt that, on the whole, a large addition has been made to the funded property of persons receiving dividends in Dublin. Mr. Rice, and others, use the fact to show that Ireland is making great progress in wealth; but there are considerations which make it a very equivocal test of real prosperity. Persons who wish to save the remnant of their property from the ruin of a falling trade, are very likely to sell off, and vest all they can save in the funds. Many such persons are well known to have taken this course in Ireland, within the last twenty-five years, and to have made no inconsiderable addition to the Irish funded capital. It has also received an augmentation in a way that would not generally be supposed, and we shall mention an instance. A gentleman, residing in Ireland, received a legacy as large as £400,000 from a relative who died in England. The money was in the English funds, and having been transferred to the Irish, made an addition to its amount to the mass of funded capital. The instances are very common, of additions, in this way, to Irish funded property. They certainly attest the improved condition of the parties directly interested; but prove nothing with respect to the general condition of the people. It is more than likely that the funded capital of Ireland would be much smaller, if there were more opportunities for the profitable employment of capital, and if the country were, generally, more prosperous. Had the transferences augmented the funded capital to £40,000,000, instead of £16,000,000, the fact could not be taken as evidence of any material improvement in the condition of the people, while the revenue remains so unproductive. There is no "capital" of such little value, as far as the mass of the people are concerned, as that which is so properly said to be "locked up" in the funds.

Only one other topic remains, of Mr. Rice's speech, on which we will offer an observation. It adduces grants for wide streets in Dublin, as a proof of the bounty of the imperial parliament. A

sum of £261,624 had been dedicated to this object in about twenty-four years. The amount was considerable; but we utterly deny the assertion to be found in the speech of 1833, that it was money advanced “out of the actual taxation of England, for the benefit of Ireland.” We deny that it was “gold” which England had given for our uses. Every payment in Ireland is in Irish “gold,” and issues from Irish taxation exclusively. This is proved by the document given in a preceding page (68), which shows that up to 1842 England had a balance of remittance in her favour, not including revenue collected in England on articles consumed in Ireland, of £17,664,178.

All grants and loans for Ireland are, we repeat, advanced in Irish money; they have been considerable; but there has been no “capital lent by England to Ireland,” as is asserted in this speech. It is true that £6,432,000 have been advanced out of the consolidated fund for Irish purposes, but it was the consolidated fund *of Ireland*; and the entire of this mass of capital (principally dedicated to gaols and police uses) has been repaid, or, is in process of repayment. All this is true; but it was a gross mistake of Mr. Rice to suppose, that the grants for Ireland have been “unaccompanied by any similar grants, to the same extent, for other parts of the empire. A sum of £261,000 has been paid for Dublin wide streets; but the improvements in Regent-street, London, and Westminster, have cost £1,294,000; the port of London has cost £1,523,000; the Caledonian canal, £955,000; the Leith docks, £265,000; the Highland roads, £401,000; London bridge, £623,000; and the college of Edinburgh, £132,000. All the grants of this character, for England and Scotland, have amounted to £15,661,000. This has been shown by a paper which was not in existence in 1833;\* but the principal payments were made before that year, and they were as accessible to Mr. Rice, as the amounts of Irish expenditure, if he had thought proper to seek for them.

\* Paper 305, of Sessions 1842.

## CHAPTER X.

## REPRESENTATIONS IN THE RAILWAY REPORT—PAMPHLET OF MR. MONTGOMERY MARTIN.

COMMISSIONERS appointed to consider and recommend a general system of railways for Ireland, published a voluminous report in 1838. In it there is a table to show what the commissioners were led to believe to have been the progress of commerce in Ireland between 1825 and 1835. We shall take its totals of the exports and imports in 1835, and contrast them with the exports and imports of 1825, as given in "the Summary Report" on the state of the Irish poor, in 1830:—

	1825.		1835.
Exports, ... ..	£9,243,000	...	£17,394,000
Imports, ... ..	8,596,000	...	15,337,000
United exports and imports,	£17,839,000	...	£32,731,000

The representation of the commissioners appears to have been implicitly adopted by almost every person who has written or spoken on the condition of Ireland since 1838. There are the most satisfactory grounds for believing it altogether fallacious.

In the first place, the commissioners had no authentic *data* for their conclusions; they admit this in the following passage:—

"It is greatly to be regretted, that on a matter so important, and capable of affording so useful an indication of the condition of the country, documents having official authority cannot be referred to. To supply this deficiency we applied to the commissioners of customs, who directed their collectors at the several ports to prepare the returns given in the Appendix B., No. IX."

The collectors had no records, and the totals they set down must have been conjectural, or taken from the representations of parties who were under a natural temptation to exaggerate their transactions. Correctness could not be possible under such circumstances.

According to the tables of the commissioners, commerce had nearly



doubled in ten years succeeding 1825. No such progress can be inferred from the transactions of the ten years preceding.

Year.	Imports.	Exports.	Real values of exports.
1815 ...	£7,245,043	... £7,139,635	... £13,562,090
1816 ...	6,106,877	... 7,076,122	... 12,164,503
1817 ...	5,084,890	... 6,703,790	... 9,111,756
1818 ...	5,644,175	... 6,563,454	... 10,526,325
1819 ...	6,098,720	... 6,521,029	... 11,776,860
1820 ...	6,395,972	... 5,770,465	... 9,747,206
1821 ...	5,197,192	... 7,179,222	... 10,308,713
1822 ...	6,548,515	... 7,781,652	... 9,808,057
1823 ...	6,607,487	... 6,825,909	... 7,871,237
1824 ...	6,020,975	... 8,152,749	... 9,695,871
1825 ...	6,324,708	... 6,293,678	... 7,322,582

This exhibits a decrease of transactions, instead of an augmentation; and there was nothing in the latter ten years which could lead us to believe that there was a different result in that interval.

In the commissioners' tables it is represented that the linen exports had increased twenty-seven per cent. There is an authentic account of the British transactions in the exportation of linen between 1825 and 1835, deducible from the annual finance accounts. The value of this commodity exported in the two years just mentioned, was as follows:—

Year.	Official value.	Real value.
1825 ...	£3,280,000	... £2,440,000
1835 ...	3,760,000	... 2,360,000

This shows a decline in real value, but an increase of above fourteen per cent. in official value. If there was, however, a far greater increase in both values, there would be ground to suppose it was a Scotch and not an Irish increase; for, according to "M'Culloch's Commercial Dictionary," the Scotch linen trade has been making, since 1813, a progress almost as great as the Irish did before the Union. In that year the exportation of Scotch linen was nineteen millions of yards, but in 1822 it had risen to thirty-six millions.

We have official records of the foreign trade of Ireland between 1825 and 1835; but it negatives the supposition, that there was any advance of the general trade. The imports, it appears, were about stationary, but there was a great decline in the exports:—

Year.	Imports.	Exports.
1825 ...	£1,400,000	... £735,000
1835 ...	1,450,000	... 336,000

There was no increase of the Irish revenue in the interval.

Aggregate amount of Irish revenue in five			
years, ending 1825	...	...	£22,538,000
Ditto, ditto, 1835	...	...	22,096,000

It may be said that taxes were repealed between these years which affected the revenue; but the answer is, that taxes were imposed, and that the increase in the consumption of spirits would, in itself, more than counterbalance all that could be lost by repealed taxes. In 1825 the Exchequer derived from Irish whiskey £770,000; but its receipts from the same commodity in 1835 were, £1,490,000.

According to the commissioners' report, tea consumption advanced twenty-two per cent. The duty upon it was paid in London during a portion of the time, and our statistics are so far defective in its regard; but we can show what the consumption was after 1835, and until Mathewism began to make progress, and it does not bear out the hypothesis of the commissioners:—

Tea duty, 1836	...	...	...	...	...	£476,000
„ 1837	...	...	...	...	...	472,000
„ 1838	...	...	...	...	...	409,000
„ 1839	...	...	...	...	...	405,000

If we compare 1825 to 1835, with reference to the consumption of materials for manufactures, there was the reverse of progress:—

	1825.	1835.
Ashes, ...	£13,000	2
Barilla, ...	31,000	9,000
Bark, ...	3,600	4,900
Brimstone	14,000	519
Hemp, ...	6,900	134
Iron, ...	3,300	765
Silk, ...	4,900	19
Valonia, ...	3,300	2,600
Cotton wool,	4,000	316
Timber ...	149,000	83,00

Coupling these facts with the admitted want of authentic *data*, there can be no doubt that the totals exhibited in the railway report are exaggerated to an extent for which it would be difficult to find a parallel; and, yet, there is scarcely a recent work upon Ireland, in which they are not regarded as authentic. The commissioners themselves state, that if even the progress was as great as might be inferred from their tables of exports and imports, it was not visible in the condition of the mass of the people:—"We regret," they say, "that the state of the labouring population does not warrant us in assuming, that any considerable portion of this increased consumption is shared by them." In another place they assert, that "the diet of the people is much inferior to what it was at the commencement of the present century."

## MR. MONTGOMERY MARTIN.

This gentleman is entitled to some attention in the present inquiry, for he has written a pamphlet on the Repeal question, which is understood to have procured for him the treasurership of Hong Kong; and he was the author of a work on the same subject, in 1833, which, according to a statement of Mr. John Augustus O'Neill at the Repeal Association, Mr. (now Lord) Stanley referred that gentleman to, that he might be confirmed in his former hostility to the restoration of the Irish parliament. Fortunately, however, it is only necessary to state a few of the propositions of this writer, and to give three or four specimens (one would be sufficient) of the means by which he tries to *entrap* the assent of the British public.

He asserts that Ireland was decaying before the Union, and that her prosperity, which is now immense,\* is only to be dated from that event. He states that the absentee rental does not exceed £2,000,000, which was the amount it was *proved* to have reached forty years ago. He says that the Union was strongly supported by the property and intelligence of Ireland; and that, according to the advice of Mr. Pitt, it was "temperately, dispassionately, and deliberately considered and discussed." He says that the same parliamentary franchise exists in England and Ireland; and that Ireland has been spared, and dealt leniently with, in taxation. He makes many assertions regarding that "anomalous community called the Irish parliament;" and amongst the rest, that they "conceded to the crown the claim relative to the appropriation of the surplus revenue in 1753." So much for the propositions, and now for the process of demonstration.

Proceeding to consider the state of things before the Union, Mr.

\* A pleasant anecdote, as to those "immense" advantages which have not the convenience of being perceptible, was told by Mr. O'Connell in the Dublin Corporation discussion. "There was a learned Doctor (Andrews, the Provost of Trinity College), who made a speech in 1776, in which he attempted to show that the country was prosperous; and an old counsellor, named Harwood, who pulled his cloak from right to left while speaking, made the following reply:—"He congratulated the house upon such a senator, the university upon such a president, and the kingdom upon such an advocate, which had proved all at once to be so very rich, from of late being so very poor. As to myself," said he, "it would be the utmost ingratitude if I did not return the gentleman my particular thanks for the pleasure he made me feel during his very long, yet very short, oration, for he persuaded me that every halfpenny in my pocket was turned into a guinea! Nor am I convinced that the thing may not be so still; wherefore, let me examine." Then pulling some out of his pocket, he turned to the house, and concluded with these words: "Oh, no, my dear friends! I find I was deceived; for the halfpence are but halfpence still!"



Martin undertakes to show, that in exports "there was a decrease on every item" between 1782 and the Union. He adduces figures for the purpose, and gives them in fifteen columns. Do they show "decrease on every item?" They certainly do; and if such were not the case, they would not have been permitted to appear in the pages of Mr. Montgomery Martin. But fifteen columns are not half the columns of the Irish exports, and the fifteen selected contained the most insignificant articles. There are nineteen additional columns including the following:—

Hams	Hogs
Bacon and Flitches	Linen and
Beef	Pork
Butter	

What has Mr. Montgomery Martin done with these nineteen columns, comprising even the "staple" commodity, linen? *He omitted them altogether*, that he might be able to exhibit "decrease on every item." We need not say that the conclusion to which he would lead his official patrons and the British public, was diametrically opposite to the fact. There was a fluctuation and decrease in some comparatively insignificant instances; but there was, *on the whole*, a large increase in exports, though the opposite fact was alleged by Mr. Montgomery Martin.

Mr. Martin referred to "tonnage" before and after the Union, with the view of showing that there was an increase in the latter period. He took, first, the interval from 1790 to 1799; next, that from 1821 to 1830. He then came to the interval between 1831 and 1841. The former periods he was able to manage as he desired, for they worked to an end, very unimportant in itself, but to which he nevertheless attached much value. The last exhibited results adverse to his argument. What was his resource? He informed his reader that there were "*no returns*," though returns were accessible to every reader of the annual finance accounts.

Comparing the customs receipts of Dublin at two periods, Mr. Martin shows a large increase, expecting, of course, his official patrons and the British public to conclude, that there was a proportionate increase all over Ireland. Nearly the entire difference in the case of Dublin arose from the fact, that the payment of the tea duties was shifted from London to Dublin after a lapse of some years, but no intimation of this circumstance is to be found in the work of Mr. Martin!

It suited this worthy gentleman's purposes to make it appear, that the consumption of malt in Ireland was greater in late years than formerly. A parliamentary paper supplied him with amounts, beginning in 1810, and reaching down to 1840. If the whole table were copied, the top and bottom of a long column of figures would be the following:—

In 1810	...	3,033,202	Bushels.
„ 1840	...	1,604,307	„

This shows a decline of nearly one-half, but Mr. Martin wished to exhibit an increase, or, at least, to avoid a confession of decrease in this article of malt; and accordingly he took a period of ten years from that portion of the column of forty which best answered his purpose, and his top and bottom amounts are the following:—

In 1830	...	2,079,468	Bushels.
„ 1839	...	2,101,744	„

His ten years were taken, with a single exception, from the bottom of the column of forty years. Why the single exception? Why end at 1839 instead of 1840? Just for this reason, that Mr. Martin wanted to show increase, or steadiness in the consumption; and that 1839 exhibited an amount of 2,100,000, while 1840 presented an amount of only 1,600,000!!!\*

We think the reader has enough of the elucidations of Mr. Montgomery Martin; but one or two remarks may not be unnecessary upon a point he has dwelt upon, because it is taken up by others.

He assumes that Ireland, with a population (let us say) of 8,000,000, raises only one-half that amount of revenue. He assumes that Great Britain, with only double the population, raises nearly twelve times the amount of revenue. On this he enters into a computation, and says, that the Irish revenue is not equal to more than ten shillings a head, while the British is fifty shillings a head; and his conclusion, of course, is, that Britain endures a proportionably excessive rate of taxation. A practical illustration is most convincing in a case of this description. Let the population of Wales be taken and compared with its declared revenue, and the *head-tax* will be found, in its instance, even less than the Irish. It will be eight shillings instead of ten shillings, though every person is aware that there is no difference in the rate of taxation between

\* In the Appendix (No. V) we insert the original Parliamentary Paper, and mark by asterisks the figures selected by Mr. Montgomery Martin.

England and Wales. The too certain fact with regard to Ireland is, that every individual who consumes an article subject to customs duties, or stamp duties, or excise duties, with the exception of two or three, which are the least oppressive, pays the full amount of taxation to which it is liable in Great Britain.\*

\* There is an excise duty in England on bricks and post horses, which only affects the rich. Both little exceed half a million in a year. There is a duty on soap, with such a drawback as secures for the manufacturers nearly a monopoly of the Irish market. The duty is £970,000, while the drawback and allowances exceed £220,000.



## CHAPTER XI.

## EXPEDIENCY OF REPEALING THE UNION.

THAT the legislative Union should be repealed, is a plain corollary from the conclusions, on the various heads of inquiry, at which we have now arrived. That measure was so uncalled for, and unjust, in all its bearings, and it has been followed by a system of government, legislative and executive, so unwise, so manifestly unsuitable to the circumstances in which the country was placed, and so utterly regardless of the opinions and feelings of the Irish people, that the mind, in spite of itself, is forced to the conviction, that there is no radical or permanent remedy, but in the restoration of the Irish parliament. Every day's experience, for four and forty years, has proved the delusiveness of the expectation, that the Union would work well, or satisfactorily, for Ireland. It forced the Catholic population—as we have already had occasion to observe—to a twenty-nine years' harassing, and most injurious agitation, to assert their religious rights; and success, at length, was avowedly a concession—not to justice, but necessity. It has deprived the Irish nation of the chances of prompt, diligent, or salutary legislation. In nineteen years after it passed, Mr. Peel, notwithstanding the position he held, as a twice-chosen chief-manager of the affairs of Ireland, was unable to fix the attention of the imperial House of Commons on an Irish subject of unquestionable importance, brought forward under the sanction of the crown; and he had to complain of the “impatience” and “listlessness” with which Irish questions were treated in the house.\* When legislation has been found practicable, its

\* In the *Times* newspaper of the 10th of February, 1819, we read as follows:—“Mr. R. Peel observed, with regret, the inattention and listlessness with which the house were looking on a question (a grand jury bill) so important to the interests and prosperity of Ireland. For his own part he conceived that the affairs of Ireland—relatively situated as Ireland was towards us, and with the comparative minority of the members the sister country sent to the British parliament, they deserved to engage the serious consideration of the house whenever they came before it.” In another London paper the following is the version: Mr. Peel said “he regretted to find any impatience manifested by the house on the present occasion. . . . When he considered the importance of Ireland, the small number of representatives which she sends from her own shores to sit in the British senate, and the little time which the concerns of that country occupy, he would be forgiven for saying, that he thought some small attention should be given to her affairs; he thought in a full house, Ireland might have justly expected a little more consideration to her interests, and to her situation.”

enactments were partial, stinted, and invidious. The parliamentary and municipal reform acts are memorable examples. The deliberate and inflexible resolution to limit the Irish representatives to one hundred and five, must, from the quarter whence the changes in the representative system emanated, be regarded as conclusive evidence that all parties in England tacitly agree that the English people, however ill-informed or ill-disposed, should be the law makers for Ireland; and, that it is quite vain to hope that the Irish will ever obtain an influence in the imperial parliament, proportioned to what they know to be their numbers, and what Whigs and Tories represent to be their increased and increasing wealth. Many opposed the introduction of poor laws into Ireland, and many advocated that measure, but no one in Ireland approved the law which has been passed; yet it has received the countenance of the two great parties who alternately form both the legislative and the executive powers in England; and to the present moment there appears no prospect of any modification of its provisions. There is, indeed, no time to legislate for Ireland, even in instances in which there could be no party jealousies to be offended or alarmed. As we recede from the era of the Union, our chances of being governed by men who know or understand Ireland, and who will have leisure to make themselves acquainted with our wants or our wishes, are lessened. Lord Castlereagh had to shield us from the inflictions of Englishmen, impatient to tax us, in the second year of the Union, by reminding them that our responsibilities, connected with debt, did not demand a rate of taxation equal to the British.\* Mr. Secretary Peel had not Lord Castlereagh's experience of Ireland under her own parliament, and was not bound by Lord Castlereagh's obligations, either as a native of Ireland, or a participator in the work of legislative destruction; yet he was near enough in his ministry to the time of the Union to have his mind filled with the natural expectations of Irishmen, and the retributive justice due for injury notoriously inflicted; and accordingly he cried shame at the "listlessness" of 1819: and he would have upheld the bounty of the Irish parliament, at least in those cases in which the capital of the country, where it held its sittings, and effected the mighty achievements of its latter days, was

\* On the 27th of April, 1802, in a debate on the imports and exports duties' bill, Lord Castlereagh, in answer to Sir Robert Peel (the elder), said:—"If the burdens of Ireland were not co-existent with those of Great Britain, it was not just to call upon Ireland to adopt the same system of taxation."

concerned. Mr. Goulburn was ten years junior to Mr. Peel, in his personal knowledge of Irish affairs—ten years more distant from the Union; and it is most probable that he was not aware that his predecessor ever uttered a word in favour of the wide-street fund, or thought fit to make any public acknowledgment of a claim arising from the loss of the Irish parliament. But it is certain, at all events, that Mr. Goulburn abolished the wide-street grant, and other grants more necessary to the well-being of the country, without any apparent consciousness that he was inflicting a wrong, or creating even a disappointment. Since his time we have had men to whom, on entering office, the fact appeared to be very indistinctly known, that we ever had a parliament in Ireland, or at least, that there were obligations connected with it, which it was a grave and very important duty of a British minister to remember and respect. It follows, as far as experience has hitherto gone, that it is necessary to the prosperity of Ireland, and the contentment of its people, that they should possess, again, a domestic legislature.\*

\* Above twelve years ago, a British minister (now Earl of Ripon) found the following reasons for the introduction of a legislative assembly into the colony of Newfoundland. He said that such institutions “have invariably secured the attachment of the people, by giving them a large share in the management of their own affairs; by affording an open field for the free exercise of talents and public spirit; by providing honourable ambition with a legitimate object, and reward; by insuring immediate and careful attention to the various exigencies of society; and by promoting a judicious and frugal administration of public affairs.”—Paper 704, of Sessions 1832.



## CHAPTER XII.

OBJECTIONS GENERALLY URGED IN ENGLAND TO THE RESTORATION  
OF THE IRISH PARLIAMENT.

ENGLAND urges, 1st—That a Repeal of the Union would be a disturbance of a system, now established forty-four years. 2d—That it is not needful to Ireland, as the defects of the past government, if any exist, are not of a nature that may not be remedied by the imperial parliament. 3d—That Ireland has, in reality, greatly advanced. 4th—That the Scotch have prospered without a parliament. 5th—That the desire for the Repeal of the Union is the effect of “agitation.” 6th—That a restoration of the Irish parliament would be a restoration of jobbing and religious discord. And lastly—That the ultimate, and not remote, consequence of a Repeal of the Union would be, “the dismemberment of the empire.”

On the first objection it may be observed, that bad laws borrow no alleviation from antiquity. The Union was only thirty-four years old when the last parliamentary struggle was made against it; and it was not four years old when all Ireland, that was not bought, or blindfolded by religious fanaticism, was ready to vote that it was a *proved* calamity. There is no extent of time connected with the Union, that can bear any comparison to the duration of the Irish parliament.

2.—Experience is the best guide in an estimate of the probable effects of the existing system of legislation (if it should continue) in time to come. The business of the imperial parliament is becoming every year more unmanageable; but, if even there were nothing to be complained of on this ground, the Irish people could not possess, through its means, the real and practical advantages of self government. Though the Irish representatives were doubled, they would still be only two hundred and ten in six hundred and fifty-eight.

3.—This objection has, as we persuade ourselves, been abundantly answered in the preceding pages. If Ireland has not advanced in the ratio of the British advance, she has a right to complain of the Union, as a source of deep and grievous injury, for she advanced

more rapidly than Britain, under her emancipated parliament; and her population, since the Union, has increased more than the British. The revenue test is, we repeat, the only one that can be relied upon with any confidence. We shall by its means see what was the relative position of the two countries, in the years ending, January, 1800 and 1844.

		British receipt.		Irish receipt.
1800	...	£34,803,659	...	£3,880,640
1844	...	51,321,566	...	4,099,061*

The British increase, within the period, was forty-seven per cent., while the Irish increase was scarcely six per cent. In ten years *before* the Union, the Irish increase was one hundred per cent. When the ratio in which the taxation of the two countries was reduced, is taken into account, the comparison is still more unfavourable; and when to this consideration is added the great increase of the Irish population, the conclusion cannot be resisted, that the condition of Ireland has, comparatively, been a retrograde one since the Union.

4.—If Scotland has prospered, we have already shown the grounds for the conclusion, that it is an effect wholly independent of her Union. The Scotch revenue has more than doubled since the commencement of the present century. This extraordinary result could have had nothing to do with the Scotch Union; but the case of Ireland is in all respects different. The Scotch did *not* prosper under their parliament; the Irish, on the contrary, greatly prospered. It may be argued that the Scotch have not suffered by the Scotch Union, but it is proved that the Irish *have* suffered by the Irish. The population of the two countries are not alike, either in numbers or condition. Property is not similarly situated in Ireland and Scotland. Eleven-twelfths of the territory of Scotland have not been confiscated and made the possession of strangers. When there were forfeitures in Scotland the proceeds were applied to the improvement of the general condition of the people. Considering the magnitude of the population of Ireland, and its manifold and most puzzling anomalies, there is not one-fiftieth part of the work for a domestic parliament in Scotland that exists in Ireland.

5.—To suppose that agitation is necessary to the excitement of a

\* The amounts for 1800 are taken from Paper 256 of Sessions 1824. The amounts of 1844 are taken from the "Finance Accounts," excluding, however, from the British receipts an incidental sum received from China.

desire for a native parliament in Ireland, is to suppose that a preference for self-government is not a natural sentiment in the human mind; that there was nothing in the way in which the Union was carried to warrant complaint; that it is agreeable to a people to be forced into an arrangement affecting those interests which they most value; that the circumstances of Ireland have been improved; that she possesses every advantage she had under her own parliament, as to the fiscal exactions affecting every comfort or necessary of life; that she is indifferent to the absence of her proprietary; that rags and wretchedness are no just cause of sorrow or disappointment to her people; and, in fine, that she has wanted none of those blessings within the power of legislation or government, which ought to make a people happy and contented. All the Protestants *were* united in resisting the Union; all the Catholics *are* united in seeking its repeal. Both parties, to some extent, are now combined; but they all would be confederated if there were not considerations to influence one of them unconnected with the measure itself. If the whole population of Ireland were Catholic or Protestant, it is not disputed that all would be for Repeal. There must, therefore, be something in the Union which it requires no agitation to render hateful to the Irish people.

6.—A restored parliament in Ireland could be no parliament of jobbers in the present state of opinion; and it would be greatly instrumental in extending that intercourse between persons of different religious persuasions from which concord has always been known to proceed. Religious animosity was never so prevalent or rancorous in Ireland as since the Union. It was excited to carry that measure, and it is still plainly encouraged for Union purposes. The Union was a conquest, and such always must it be regarded. In this light was it considered by Lord Grey, when he said that the Irish would watch their opportunity of recovering that which was taken from them by force. There must be a system (however it may be disguised) partaking of a domination under such circumstances; and the more effectually to dominate, the English minister must ever be anxious to divide. The Union, then, must always be, as far as we have been able as yet to judge, a fertile source of that discord which it is said to modify and restrain.

7.—We hear of “the dismemberment of the empire,” because it is believed that mere sound influences the ignorant and unthinking. All who opposed the Union contended that it was calculated to pro-



duce dismemberment.\* There was some sense in this doctrine, for they anticipated that extreme of popular discontent, which produces a desire for dismemberment. The assertion that the Irish would separate from English connection, if they succeeded in their present efforts, involves the absurdity of imputing to them a wish without a motive. No people ever desired a revolution without a cause; and when there is a passion for change, it does not, assuredly, acquire strength in proportion to the magnitude of the risks, or the insignificance of the probable advantages.

\* In the debate of the 5th of February, 1800, when Lord Castlereagh proposed the measure, every member who spoke against it avowed himself actuated by his wish to maintain the connection.

Mr. Waller said—the Union will weaken, if not dissolve the connection.

Colonel Barry.—It will dissolve the connection.

Lord Maxwell.—It will be ruinous to both countries.

Mr. Saunderson.—It will endanger, perhaps dissolve, the connection.

Mr. Saurin.—It will endanger the present happy constitution and connection with Great Britain.

Lord Matthew.—The Union will tend more to weaken than fortify the connection.

Lord Cole.—The strongest abhorrence of the Union is compatible with the most unshaken attachment to the connection.

Mr. John Claudius Beresford.—It will undermine the welfare, and subvert the liberties of Ireland, and endanger the connection.

The Right Honourable W. B. Ponsonby.—I oppose the Union from an anxious desire to maintain the connection.

The Right Honourable George Ogle.—A rejection of the Union is the only mode by which the connection can be preserved.

Mr. R. French.—The preservation of the Irish parliament will encourage and maintain the connection.

Mr. Gorges.—The happy communion with Great Britain is best maintained by the constitution of 1782.

Mr. George Ponsonby.—The parliament which so recently protected the Irish crown is the firm and saving bond of British connection.

Colonel Vereker.—The Union will effect the downfall of Ireland, the annihilation of her independence, and the separation from British connection.

Mr. Lee was opposed to the Union because the people delighted in British connection.

Mr. Bushe.—Union is alienation from British connection.

Mr. Peter Burrows.—This Union not only menaces the connection, but the Constitution itself.

## CHAPTER XIII.

UNDER WHAT MODIFICATIONS SHOULD A PARLIAMENT BE RE-ASSEMBLED  
IN IRELAND?

THE wisdom taught during the existence of the former parliament, should, of course, be the great instructor in a new state of affairs. One of the most obvious precautions would be, an agreement to put the regency question out of dispute, in the way already indicated.

Commerce should be left free. It was a never-ceasing cause of solicitude and contention under the old system. The Irish demanded, in the days of their strength, the facilities of profitable trade before any other right of a free constitution. British jealousy, on the other hand, threw more obstacles in the way of the settlement proposed in 1785, than it had encountered in Ireland. The commerce between the two countries has now been for nearly twenty years "on the footing of a coasting trade," Dublin being to Liverpool, in this respect, in the relation in which Liverpool is to Bristol or Glasgow. It should be a fundamental law of the new adjustment, that this state of things should remain unaltered. It would be of more importance to Britain than Ireland, in the existing condition of the two countries; but Ireland would have great reason to rely upon the resources to be derived from a better management of her internal affairs, and the removal of all grounds of difference, on the great source of past disputes, is worth a large sacrifice.

The financial arrangements should be those proposed at the Union; and how desirable it is that nothing needlessly should be done to contravene the declared policy of that measure, requires not to be enforced by argument. At the Union the people of Ireland were assured—

First, that they should be exposed to no liability as to past expenditure; and,

Secondly, that their contribution to future expenditure should be proportioned to their ability.

To realize these assurances in all ways, was an object to which it was worth while that England should make all possible sacrifices. No Repealer should now be able to assert that one promise or engagement was unfulfilled. The result, however, has been a total disappointment

of the expectations held out in both instances. In causing this result, the chief agency (as we have shown) has been the fixing of a rate of expenditure for Ireland above her ability. That a rate of this character *had* been fixed, is questioned in no quarter. One of the persons who pronounced on the subject most authoritatively, is Mr. Goulburn, who, in a debate, in 1822, on a motion of Sir John Newport, said, that "the contribution imposed on Ireland, of two-seventeenths, is admitted on all hands to have been more than she could bear."

There can be no doubt, now, as to the ability of Ireland. Nearly all the taxes are assimilated, and if the whole were assimilated, experience has shown that the result might be very far from advantageous to the revenue. Our assessed taxes were a failing source of income, when they were repealed. The new stamp duties have done little for the Exchequer. Of the temporary income tax, Irish property pays its quota, to the extent, perhaps, of a third of its whole amount; and if such a tax affected all the property of Ireland, it might cause a diminution in other branches of revenue. In short, it may fairly be assumed, that we have the ability of Ireland indicated in the existing receipts; and that if proportions were now fixed, there would be no room for error regarding them.

There is nothing to prevent a carrying out of the financial engagements of the Union to the fullest extent that ever was contemplated, even without Repeal. An act of parliament, passed in 1816, consolidated the separate debts, and abolished proportionate expenditure, rendering all the taxes of Ireland indiscriminately applicable to all the purposes of the imperial Exchequer. Lord Castlereagh did not contend that it was the only measure which could be adopted at that time, saying merely, it was that which the government thought most expedient. The obvious course, if not to do justice to Ireland, at least to satisfy her people, that no financial fraud was intended at the Union, was, to rectify any error that was committed in fixing a rate of contribution. That course could be adopted to-morrow without involving the necessity of creating one new office, or even an additional set of Treasury books.

Suppose two expenditures were now declared—one "separate," relating to transactions before the Union; and the other "joint," relating to subsequent transactions; and that a contribution were demandable from Ireland proportioned to her ability, the engagements of the Union would be fully realized; but what would be the practical



difference to this country? The question is of the greatest importance, and we shall endeavour to answer it by showing what would be the effect in any of the recent years.

We shall take the average expenditure to be £52,000,000; and suppose, for the sake of round numbers, that £17,000,000 are required for the payment of the interest of the debts due at the Union, £16,000,000 for Great Britain and £1,000,000 for Ireland. These amounts deducted from the total, leave a balance of £35,000,000 for joint expenditure. Ireland's portion of the whole revenue is only £4,000,000, or one-thirteenth. Her payment to joint expenditure should be in a similar ratio, which would make her quota £2,690,000. To this should be added £1,000,000, the interest of separate debt; and both deducted from her assumed revenue would leave a balance of £310,000, which would be applicable, according to the terms of the act of Union, to the liquidation of debt, or the reduction of taxes, or the internal improvement of the country. If the revenue of Ireland were taken at an amount lower than £4,000,000, the result would be less important, but there would be an opposite effect if it were £7,000,000 or £8,000,000. Supposing the Irish revenue the one-sixth instead of the one-thirteenth of the whole, there would be a greatly increased contribution from Ireland to joint expenditure, but a far larger surplus than that stated, would remain for the three Irish purposes mentioned in the act of Union. The contribution would be £5,630,000, but there would be a revenue of £8,660,000, which, after paying the interest of the separate debt, would leave a surplus of more than £2,000,000 for Irish purposes. The necessary effect of the existing arrangement is, that it deprives Ireland of all the promised benefit that should fairly arise from the improvement of her revenue. It ought to be now, at least, £9,000,000 or £10,000,000 a year; and under a better management of the Irish affairs, there is no doubt that it would reach to that sum before a very great lapse of time. In so prosperous a state of the Irish revenue, the surplus would be of great comparative magnitude and importance, and would be an acquisition, under the terms of the act of Union, in place of that loss which, unhappily, is so generally to be associated with it. By the act of consolidation, however, all contingent advantages are taken away, and the Irish revenue, even to the utmost extent, is applicable to imperial expenditure, without the deduction of a shilling for any purpose especially Irish. Under the act of Union, Ireland would gain by the increase of her revenue; under the act of consolidation, she would lose.

Without supposing at all any very great increase of the Irish revenue, we have shown the practical loss which in any ordinary year must result from the consolidation of the Exchequers, while the whole receipt, whether collected in Great Britain or Ireland, may be estimated even so low as £4,000,000. It may be said that there are grants for Irish purposes every year. It is true, but they are annually diminishing, and they do not now amount to anything like the sum which would accrue, as a matter of *right*, to Ireland under the act of Union, if it had not already been repealed in its principal financial arrangements.

But there is another great consideration connected with the operation of an act by which the treaty of Union has unquestionably been repealed in those instances in which it was of greatest importance to Ireland. It bound Great Britain to the payment of the interest of its own debt by separate taxation. That it was its intention so to bind Great Britain, was declared by every person who supported the measure, from Mr. Pitt to Dr. Duigenan; and we are to suppose that the act itself would have carried the design fully into effect, if the imperial parliament had not interfered by the measure of 1816. The amount of interest for debt to which Great Britain was liable when the act took effect, was, for funded and unfunded debt, £16,566,000.\* If no consolidation of the Exchequers had taken place, England should have raised this amount of revenue, by *exclusive taxes*, since 1816. The exclusive taxation of Great Britain has, for years, been *many millions* under this amount; and every reduction of exclusive British taxation is attended with the necessary consequence of exposing Ireland to new fiscal exactions. If the exclusive taxation of Great Britain were to-morrow raised to the Union amount, a reduction of Irish taxation would be the inevitable consequence. All our low rates of taxation in the times gone, by were the effect of the peculiar liabilities of Great Britain; when there was no special liability, there remained nothing even to remind the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that there should be one rate of burden for the country which had for ages been "deprived of the use of its own resources," and another for that nation which profited by the proscription, or at all events had gathered enormous wealth while the proscription continued. The temporary income tax has considerably raised the exclusive taxation of Great Britain within these two or

\* Paper 256, of Sessions 1824.

three years, but all the exclusive taxation produces only the following amount:—

Land tax, assessed taxes, and property tax, ...	£9,800,000
Excess of spirit duty (taking it to be half of the entire revenue,) ... ..	1,300,000
Soap tax, ... ..	808,000
Bricks, ... ..	348,000
Post-horse duty ... ..	145,000
	<hr/>
	£12,401,000

Even this amount is more than £4,000,000 below the liability of Great Britain connected with what the authors of the Union regarded her separate debt. But £5,387,000 of the whole amount is from a declaredly temporary tax. Before it was imposed, the separate taxation of Great Britain could not, even by exaggeration, be said to have amounted to £8,000,000 a year. This was £8,000,000 less than her liability connected with her separate debt; and if we suppose the same deficiency of payment to have continued for twenty-eight years, we shall have some approach to these hundreds of millions, of which Mr. Rice delighted to speak in the six hours' speech of 1834. We have not the least doubt that Great Britain has escaped, since 1816, an exclusive taxation of at least £200,000,000.

All these illustrations exhibit the interest Ireland has in the carrying out of the Union engagements, but they are a guarantee, likewise, to Great Britain, that there is nothing now proposed incompatible with what a jealous British minister regarded the unquestionable rights of Ireland.

We have now dealt with commerce and finance, the two great causes of all former dissension between the two countries. Under one head, we propose nothing inconsistent with the existing state of things; under the other, we suggest nothing incompatible with the letter or spirit of the act of Union itself, if it be admitted that that act was just, or in accordance with the professions of all its advocates.

As to the constitution of the revived parliament of Ireland, there is less ground of difference, than on any other subject. It should, for all Irish purposes, be a parliament similar to that dissolved, improved of course by such beneficial changes as have taken place in the representative body since 1800. It should have its Lords and Commons, and Appellate jurisdiction. The number of members need not be increased; but they should be returned to parliament by a constituency exercising the most extended rights enjoyed by the electors of Great Britain.



## CHAPTER XIV.

## FEDERALISM.

THIS term is commonly applied to a connection of states, such as exists in America and Switzerland, where there are local interests under local management, and the general interests are committed to the charge of a congress or diet, to which all divisions of the country send representatives. The Swiss cantons present a great diversity of local government, of popular habits, and religion; but there is seldom found a want of co-operation or uniformity in those instances in which they are required for the common advantage or protection. Each canton possesses the inherent right of managing its own affairs; and the general concerns of the republic, such as the conclusion of foreign alliances, and the defence of the country, are under the management of an assembly composed of deputies from each of the cantons, which holds its meetings successively at Berne, Zurich, and Lucerne. A plurality of votes decides all questions of ordinary moment in this diet; but where the matter is a declaration of war, or the conclusion of a treaty of peace, there must be a concurrence of three-fourths of the deputies.

In the United States of America there is complete local independence; but there is, at the same time, great vigour and efficiency in the general government. It is held latterly in Ireland by persons of much consideration, that an imitation of this system of federation would be desirable in Ireland.

“The principle of federalism has not,” says Mr. Laing, in his *Notes of a Traveller*, “been sufficiently examined by political philosophers. Theoretically, it is better adapted to the wants of man in society, than the principle of great monarchical dominions under a sole central government, wheresoever the physical or moral interests of the governed are discordant, wheresoever the rights or advantages of one mass of population, their prosperity, industry, and well being, property, natural benefits of soil, situation and climate, their manners, language, nationality in spirit or prejudice, are set aside and sacrificed to those of another mass. In almost all extensive monarchies this must be the case, from the centralization inseparable from that species

of government. Federalism seems a more natural and just principle of general government, theoretically considered, than this forced centralization. No rights or advantages of any of the parts are sacrificed in federalism, for nothing is centralized but what is necessary for the external defence, safety, and welfare of all the parts. . . . . Junctions morally or physically discordant, as that of Belgium and Holland, Austria and Lombardy, districts and populations on the Vistula and Niemen, with districts and populations on the Rhine and Moselle, are political arrangements which lack any principle of permanency founded upon their benefits to the governed. Nature forbids by the unalterable differences of soil, climate, situation, and natural advantages of country, or by the equally unalterable moral differences between people and people, that one government can equally serve all—be equally suited to promote the utmost good of all. Federalism involves a principle more akin to natural, free, and beneficial legislation, and to the improvement of the social condition of man, than governments in single extensive states, holding legislative and executive powers over distant and distinct countries and populations, whether such governments be constitutional or despotic. It is much more likely to be the future progress of society, that Europe in the course of time, civilization, and the increasing influence of public opinion on all public affairs, will resolve itself into one great federal union of many states, of extent suitable to their moral and physical peculiarities, like the union of the American States, than that those American States will, in the course of time and civilization, fall back into separate, unconnected, and hostile monarchies and aristocracies, which some modern travellers in America, assure us is their inevitable doom.”

It cannot be doubted that the Swiss cantons and the United States of America, attest the excellence of the federal principle.\* Mr. Laing regrets that the jealousy of republican institutions prevented the restoration of the federal constitution of Holland, in 1815. Under it, there was, he thinks, a display of national energy and moral strength of character which never was imitated in the small neighbouring monarchies; and he anticipates that Holland and Belgium will yet see that a federal union is indispensable to their security and independence. He points to the German custom-house union, or com-

\* A cloud has come over the cantons since these lines were written, but we trust it is not too much to hope that it will pass away.

mercial league, as an indication of the tendency of social economy in modern times towards the principle of federalism.

Sweden and Norway have been federally united since 1814, but the object chiefly aimed at was, Norwegian *domestic* independence; and the connection between the two countries may be said, in all essential instances, to be that which subsisted between Great Britain and Ireland from 1782 to 1801. The Storthing, or Norwegian parliament, exercises a very unlimited power in all state affairs. It meets, without summons or permission on the part of the sovereign, on a prescribed day, and if it passes, what amongst us is called a "bill," in three successive Storthings, the bill becomes law without the assent of the crown. Hereditary nobility is abolished in Norway; and the general representatives of the people supply their own upper house, by selecting from amongst themselves one-fourth of the entire body, which constitute the "Lagthing," and exercise functions similar to those of the House of Lords in England. It is a principle of the legislative constitution of Norway, that the towns should send one-third, and the country parts two-thirds, of the members to Storthing. The entire body is numerically inconsiderable; it cannot be less than seventy-five, but it does not exceed one hundred. The elective franchise is exercised by every native Norwegian of twenty-five who has been for five years owner or life-renter of land paying scat, or tax, or who is a burgess of any town, or possesses there a house, or land, to a value equal in English money to £30. The person elected must be thirty years of age, a resident of the country for ten years, and he must not be connected with any department of the state, or court, nor on the pension list, nor in the counting-house, or bureau, of any officer of state, or of the court. He is the representative of "election-men," who are, themselves (according to the system adopted in the United States of America) chosen out of the body of the constituency to select members for Storthing. The country is divided into electoral districts, and sub-districts. A town in which there are one hundred and fifty voters is a sub-district; but when the voters are less, it is joined to the nearest town. December, in every third year, is the usual period for the nomination of "election men." The voters assemble in the parish church, and in towns every fifty select an "election man," and in country parts every body of fifty to one hundred—the power extending to two and three "election men," when the voters are proportionably numerous. The nomination of members of Storthing



follows soon after that of election men. In towns from three to six election men nominate one member—from seven to ten, two—from eleven to fourteen, three—and from fifteen to eighteen, four—which is the utmost that can be returned for one town. The persons chosen may be either election men, or other qualified voters of each district. The first business day in February, is the period for the assembling of Storthing; and the sittings are continued to the close of April, or until the business in hand is despatched. An extraordinary session may be convened by the king, but it can only pass *interim* acts until the next regular Storthing, by which they must be ratified. The election, as well as assembling of Storthing, is triennial, with the power of intermediate sittings, if they be found needful. Each Storthing settles the taxes for the ensuing three years; enacts, repeals, or alters laws; opens loans on the credit of the state; fixes the appropriation and administration of the revenue; grants fixed sums to be applied to the different branches of expenditure, the establishments of the king, the viceroy, or members of the royal family; revises all pay and pension lists, and all civil and clerical promotions, and makes such alterations as it deems proper in any *interim* grants made since the former Storthing. It also regulates the currency, and appoints revisors to examine public accounts, and prepare abstracts of them for public information. Copies of all treatises are laid before Storthing; in its upper house it exercises the power of trying, and adjudicating, upon charges against ministers of state, judges, and its own members. In case of a failure of the royal line, it proceeds, in conjunction with Sweden, to elect a new dynasty.

Under all these circumstances it may readily be admitted, that the people of Norway have the framing and administration of their own laws more entirely in their own hands than any European nation of the present time. To their constitution (and it is no wonder) they are enthusiastically attached, and, under its auspices, it is stated the country is making great progress. Their independence, even of the regal authority, with reference to laws sanctioned by three successive votes of their parliament, has been asserted in the remarkable case of the abolition of hereditary nobility. From 1815 to 1821 this question was before Storthing, which experienced all through a steady resistance from the influence of the crown. The late king at one time meditated a forcible interference with the will of the people, and for that purpose marched a body of six thousand troops

to Christiana. Foreign interposition is believed to have been principally concerned in preventing any attempt to carry the design into effect; for, at the most critical moment, the Russian minister and the American Charge d'Affaires, made their appearance unexpectedly at Christiana, and the event was quickly followed by the withdrawing of the troops, and no more was heard of the opposition of the late king to this remarkable law. Subsequent times, however, produced various attempts to alter the Norwegian constitution by increasing the power of the crown over the acts of Storthing. The king sought for himself an absolute veto in all acts of Storthing. He claimed the initiative in all new laws and alterations of the law, and a limitation of business to such acts as he should prescribe, besides a nomination of the presidents and secretaries of the two chambers. The year 1824 was the period of this attempted revolution. Storthing held resolutely to its privileges. It appointed a committee to draw up a report embodying its opinions on every innovation proposed. The paper is described as having been one of great dignity and power. It was adopted unanimously by the representatives of the people; and it appears to have put an end to all further attempts to interfere with the free working of this excellent constitution, which is said by Mr. Laing, from whose work we take all these facts, to have gathered "strength by repose."

Federalism, in the case of Norway and Sweden, so far differs from the principle in operation in the United States of America, and the Swiss cantons, that there is no representative body to do acts connected with external relations. Norway and Sweden are to concur in the election of a new dynasty, when the occasion may arise, but no concurrence seems prescribed in any other matter. The nature of the power exercised by Storthing, is, perhaps, supposed to render such a precaution needless. It can pass laws independently of the crown, and it exercises the prerogative, not only of raising, but appropriating the public revenue, and holding the state functionaries amenable for all their acts. Authority over revenue is, probably, the most official safeguard for special interests amongst federated states. If Sweden aggrieved Norway in any case in which Norwegian interest was sacrificed to Swedish, retribution would be at hand in the appropriation of the taxes, and the various ways in which Storthing has the direct power of embarrassing the executive government.

There is no complication or diversity in the external relations of Sweden and Norway, or Switzerland, to often require congressional deliberation. It is not so in the case of the United States of America, where boundless territory, and its incidents, present in themselves new questions for consideration every year. The United States of America are, certainly, the quarter of the globe where the federal system, in the form in which it exists in that vast republic, is most indispensable to the local and general interests of the people.

Though federalism is now discussed in Ireland, as if it were a principle altogether unknown to our institutions, it was, in reality, in operation from the commencement of the British connection to the close of the last century. Ireland first had a parliamentary compact with Henry the Second; and it was, therefore, strictly a "*federal*" arrangement. It had, secondly, an improved state of legislative affairs by a far more solemn and important compact in 1782. There can be no question that the parliament of 1782 was a federal parliament, and one sufficient for the power and happiness of Ireland, though its functions were strictly of a local character. If the Union were repealed by an agreement between both countries recognising perfect freedom of commerce, and establishing the fiscal relations on the basis suggested, there would be a third compact, and certainly the best of the three. "Simple Repeal" would then, with the aid of the reforms of the last fifteen years, give Ireland the benefit of federalism, though not to the extent usually contemplated; and it would be a still further improvement of a constitutional system which had been already found to work well for the country.

There is a greater identity of general interests amongst the inhabitants of these islands, than can exist in a country so vast as the American Union. Climate is, in itself, an interruption to unity of pursuit or speculation in that boundless region. We are all concerned, here, in the same seasons and enterprises. One country may be more commercial, and another more agricultural, than its neighbour; but all are more or less commercial and agricultural, and the existing differences are much influenced by accident. A time will, assuredly, come, when there will be a general similarity in all those matters upon which external circumstances can produce any influence. Hence, there is little likelihood of any variance of interest or feeling in matters of peace or war, or colonial government or regulation, or trade or intercourse with other nations; and the less the likelihood of



such variance, the less the necessity for the powers or opportunities of congressional conference.\*

External relations are properly under the cognizance and regulation of the sovereign authority. The crown makes peace or war, appoints to colonial offices, and fiats colonial laws, and British laws to affect the colonies. That it would be disposed to exercise its prerogatives in all its dependencies, in a way satisfactory to the Irish people, sustained as they would be by the firm voice of an independent parliament, may be inferred from the instance of George the Third's prompt and effective interference, in the case of the Irish mercantile quarrel with Portugal. A restored parliament, worth having, should appropriate as well as levy the taxes. This prerogative was freely admitted by Pitt in his "propositions;" for the sum that was claimed for the naval service, or general expenditure, was to be applied "as the parliament in Ireland shall direct." There can be little doubt that the expressed wishes of such a parliament would always have due weight with the authorities at the other side of the Channel; and indeed all the ancient causes of antagonism between the countries being removed, the certainty is, that there would be a mutual disposition to concord and co-operation in all matters of regulation or government at home or abroad.

To the question, frequently asked, of "what would be done without opportunities of congressional remonstrance in case of a proposed war, or the terms of a treaty of peace?" the answer is, that if such powers could not be exercised in congress, they could very effectively be exercised elsewhere. It lies with the sovereign to make treaties and to declare war; but while the Irish parliament could command the public purse, there would be little ground of apprehension, that the interests or wishes of the people of Ireland would be forgotten or disregarded; and there would be a safeguard in this circumstance alone, that there is no peace or war which would not equally affect Great Britain and Ireland. The sovereign of this empire could do nothing in peace or war for Bristol, Liverpool, or Glasgow, that would not be done for Dublin, Cork, or Limerick.

\* In the letter of Mr. Pitt to the Duke of Rutland, from which an extract is given in a note to page 43, it is properly assumed, that in cases in which the interests of Great Britain and Ireland are identical, no differences need be apprehended between two legislatures. A navy is equally necessary to the protection of both countries; and, therefore, if the parliament of Ireland contributed an annual sum towards its support, "the parliament of England would have the means and the inducement to watch the expenditure as narrowly as if it was granted by themselves."

On the whole, then, the ardent federalists would appear to attach too much importance to their principle, as far as it would be applicable to the peculiar case of Ireland. It would seem to be regarded by some as supplying a new link to the connection with Britain (though it does not very clearly appear in what way it could do so); and it is said, that a great body of the gentry may be expected to join in a demand of domestic legislation, with congressional powers attached, who could not otherwise be induced to co-operate in the great struggle for the regeneration of Ireland. Federalism, viewed in reference to such effects, would appear to possess its chief importance. If the fact be, however, that its probable influence in these respects is exaggerated, and that it would be an obstacle instead of a facility, in the effort in which the people are now engaged, it would be desirable that the idea of pressing it on public attention, should at once, and definitively, be abandoned. One thing is most certain, that powers of congressional conference could not be rendered effective by numbers, without increasing the great evil of absenteeism, and withdrawing a large portion of the most influential of the public men of Ireland from, by far, the most important sphere of their duties.

# APPENDIX.

## No. I.

*From the speech of the Right Hon. T. S. Rice, on the Repeal of the Union, delivered in the House of Commons, April 23, 1834.*

BEFORE I proceed to show what the imperial parliament has done by legislative enactments, I beg leave first to take notice of what it has done in the way of inquiring into the condition of Ireland, into the nature of her alleged wants and grievances, and the remedies which those wants and grievances might demand. I allude to the various reports from commissioners and from select committees appointed to consider Irish affairs since the Union. Of these reports the following is a list:—

	Com- mittees.	Com- missioners.
1801 Committees.—On orders respecting the Union—on offices in Ireland, disqualifying persons from parliament ...	2	
1802 Committee.—Linen manufacture ...	1	
Commissioners.—Accounts ...		1
1803 Committees.—State of the poor—Irish exchanges ...	2	
Commissioners.—Port of Dublin ...		1
1805 Committee.—Grand canal ...	1	
1806 Commissioners.—Fees and gratuities—public offices—public pavement—accounts ...		4
1809 Commissioners.—Board of Education—paving (Dublin)—prisons—accounts ...		4
1810 Committees.—Bogs ...	1	
Commissioners.—Bogs—accounts ...		2
1811 Committees.—Bogs—public offices—Board of Education ...	3	
Commissioners.—Brewers (Dublin)—Wexford petition—public income and expenditure ...		3
1812 Committees.—Cork Green-coat Hospital—Grand Jury presentment—Grand Canal Company ...	3	
Commissioners.—Public income—public offices—accounts—education ...		4
1813 Committees.—Bogs—Irish currency—madhouses ...	3	
Commissioners.—Education—public offices—inland navigation—accounts—Board of Education ...		5
1814 Committees.—Bogs—Grand Jury presentments ...	2	
Commissioners.—Royal Canal Company—bogs—public offices—accounts ...		4
1815 Committees.—Public income and expenditure—Grand Jury presentments—poor ...	3	
Commissioners.—Education—Royal Canal Company—accounts ...		3
1816 Committees.—Public income—Grand Jury presentments—illicit distillation ...	3	
Commissioners.—Education—public accounts—inland navigation ...		3
1817 Committees.—Lunatic ...	1	
Commissioners.—Education—courts of justice ...		2
1818 Committees.—Fever hospitals—Grand Jury presentments ...	2	
Commissioners.—Education—auditing accounts—courts of justice ...		3
	27	39
	L	



	Brought forward,	Com- mittees.	Com- missioners.
1819 Commissioners.—Prisons—education—courts of justice— public accounts ... ..	27	39	4
1820 Commissioners.—Courts of justice—education—House of Industry (Dublin)—accounts ... ..			4
1821 Committees.—To consider report of commissioners on courts of justice ... ..	1		
Commissioners.—Dunmore harbour—fisheries—courts of justice—Exchequer—education ... ..			5
1822 Committees.—Dublin local taxation—Grand Jury present- ments—Limerick local taxation ... ..	3		3
Commissioners.—Courts of justice—education—fisheries ...			
1823 Committees.—Dublin local taxation—to consider reports of courts of justice—labouring poor ... ..	3		5
Commissioners.—Public accounts—education—prisons— fisheries—employment of poor ... ..			8
1824 Committees.—Dublin local taxation—Insurrection Act— valuation of land ... ..	3		5
Commissioners.—Revenue—courts of justice—public ac- counts—fisheries—public records ... ..			4
1825 Committees.—Dublin local taxation—linen trade—state of Ireland—petition of Ballinasloe relative to Roman Catholic Association ... ..	4		4
Commissioners.—Courts of justice—fisheries—education— revenue ... ..			3
1826 Committees.—Butter trade—market tolls—promissory notes Commissioners.—Revenue—Dunleary harbour—public ac- counts—fisheries—roads and bridges—justice (2) ...	1		7
1827 Committees.—Grand Jury presentations ... ..	1		9
Commissioners.—Accounts—courts of justice—roads and bridges—prisons—Paving Board—Richmond Peniten- tiary—fisheries—schools and Middleton—education ...	2		7
1828 Committees.—Education—vagrants ... ..			3
Commissioners.—Public accounts—roads and bridges— courts of justice—prisons—fisheries—education—records			6
1829 Committees.—To consider eighteenth report of judicial in- quiry—Kilrea petition (forged signatures)—miscel- laneous estimates ... ..	3		2
Commissioners.—Post-office revenue—public accounts— courts of justice—roads and bridges—prisons—fisheries			4
1830 Committees.—On nineteenth report of judicial inquiry— poor ... ..	2		3
Commissioners.—Roads and bridges—courts of justice— education—records ... ..			5
1830-31 Commissioners.—Courts of justice—prisons—roads and bridges ... ..			3
1831-32 Committees.—Boundary commission—Post-office com- munication—tithes—turnpike roads—state of Ireland...	5		3
Commissioners.—Ecclesiastical inquiry—courts of justice— education—public accounts—prisons ... ..			3
1833 Committees.—Derry bridge—Dublin and Kingston ship canal—corporations ... ..	3		
Commissioners.—Accounts—prisons—public works—eccle- siastical inquiry ... ..			4
Total ...	60	112	
Total number of Reports of Select Committees ...	60		
„ of Commissioners ...	112		
Total ...	172		

## No. II.

*An account of the origin and particulars of the Annual Parliamentary Grant for the maintenance of the Linen and Hempen Manufactures of Ireland.*

(Drawn up by the late Lord Oriel.)

The public establishments of Ireland, accustomed to receive aid from parliament, are in the habit of annually presenting to the government of the country, at the close of every year, an account of the particulars of their intended expenditure for the year to come, with a view to found upon the expediency of them, their claim to a suitable grant; but the trustees of the linen manufacture ask and receive one *fixed* sum, upon an estimate which they annually furnish, in the following form:—

“Estimate of the expense of the trustees of the linen and hempen manufactures of Ireland, for the year to end the 5th of January—

Irish.		British.
£21,600	that is,	£19,938 9s. 2½d.”

This is the *sum*, and with the exception of the *British money*, introduced since the union of the legislatures, the *form*, too, of the annual estimate.

Before the particulars of this sum shall become the subject of inquiry, it were well to give, by way of preface, the following extract from a paper, prepared and presented to the trustees\* by the Right Hon. John Foster, now Lord Oriel, because it will show the origin of our linen manufacture, and the kind of international compact that was formerly made in its favour, between the separate legislatures of Great Britain and Ireland:—

“It was first planted here by Lord Strafforde,† in the reign of Charles the First, whose endeavours to establish it were afterwards well supported by the Duke of Ormonde; but it had not gained much ground at the time of the Revolution, the woollen being the true and natural staple of the Irish, their climate and extensive sheep-grounds ensuring to them a steady and cheap supply of the raw material, much beyond their home consumption; and it appears from the preamble to the English statute of 10 and 11 Wm. III. chap. 10, that they were at the time possessed of a profitable export of it.‡

“This export was supposed to interfere, and very probably did, with the export from Britain; and a plan was in consequence undertaken there, to annihilate the woollen trade of Ireland, and to confine us to the linen manufacture in its place.

“Accordingly, an act was passed in England, 1696,§ (7 & 8 of Wm. cap. 39,) for inviting foreign Protestants to settle in Ireland, as the preamble recites, and, with that view, enacting that the import of all sorts of hemp and flax, and all the productions thereof, should from thenceforth be admitted duty-free from Ireland into England; giving a preference, by that exemption from duty, to the linen manufacture of Ireland, over the foreign, estimated at the time, as a report of the Irish House of Commons, on the 11th of February, 1774, states, to be equal to twenty-five per cent.

“This happened in 1696, and in pursuance of the foregoing plan, both houses of the English parliament addressed King William, on the 9th of June, 1698.

“The Lords stated in their address, ‘that the growing manufacture of cloth in Ireland, both by the cheapness of all sorts of necessities of life, and the

\* *Vide* their printed proceedings, 1814, p. 194.

† *Vide* his Letters and Despatches as the Lord Deputy of Ireland—1633 to 1636.

‡ Brit. Statutes, vol. ii. p. 9.

§ Brit. Statutes, vol. iii. p. 637.

goodness of materials for making all manner of cloth, doth invite your subjects of England, with their families and servants, to leave their habitations to settle there, to the increase of the woollen manufacture in Ireland, which makes your loyal subjects in this kingdom very apprehensive, that the further growth of it may greatly prejudice the said manufacture here; by which the trade of this nation, and the value of lands will greatly decrease, and the number of your people be much lessened here; wherefore, we humbly beseech your most sacred Majesty, that your Majesty would be pleased, in the most public and effectual way that may be, to declare to all your subjects of Ireland, that the growth and increase of the woollen manufacture there hath long, and will be ever looked upon with great jealousy by all your subjects of this kingdom, and if not timely remedied, may occasion very strict laws totally to prohibit and suppress the same; and, on the other hand, if they turn their industry and skill to the settling and improving the *linen manufacture*, for which, generally, the lands are very proper, *they shall receive all the countenance, favour, and protection from your royal influence, for the encouragement and promotion of the linen manufacture, to all the advantage and profit they can be capable of.*

“The Commons stated their sentiments, at the same time, in the following terms:—‘We,\* your Majesty’s most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons in parliament assembled, being very sensible that the wealth and power of this kingdom do, in a great measure, depend on the preservation of the woollen manufacture, as much as possible, entire to this realm, think it becomes us, like our ancestors, to be jealous of the increase and establishment of it elsewhere, and to use our utmost endeavours to prevent it. And, therefore, we cannot without trouble observe, that Ireland, which is dependant on, and protected by England, in the enjoyment of all they have, and which is so proper for the linen manufacture, the establishment and growth of which there, would be so enriching to themselves, and so profitable to England, should of late apply itself to the woollen manufacture, to the great prejudice of the trade of this kingdom, and so unwillingly promote the linen trade, which would benefit both themselves and us: the consequence whereof will necessitate your parliament of England to interpose to prevent the mischief that threatens us, unless your Majesty, by your authority and great wisdom, shall find means to secure the trade of England, by making your subjects of Ireland to pursue the joint interests of both kingdoms. And we do most humbly implore your Majesty’s protection and favour in this matter, that you will make it your royal care, and enjoin all those you employ in Ireland, to make it their care, and use their utmost diligence to hinder the exportation of wool from Ireland, except to be imported hither, and for discouraging the woollen manufacture, and encouraging the linen manufacture of Ireland, *to which we shall always be ready to give our utmost assistance.*’

“His Majesty thus replied to the Commons:† ‘*I shall do all that in me lies to discourage the woollen manufacture in Ireland, and encourage the linen manufacture there, and to promote the trade of England.*’

“Stronger declarations could not well be made than in those addresses and answers, that if the Irish would come into the compact of giving up their then great staple of woollens in England, and cultivating the linens in lieu thereof, they should receive ‘*all the countenance, favour, and protection, for the encouragement and promotion of their linen manufacture to all the advantages their kingdom was capable of.*’ that the Commons would always be ready to give their utmost assistance, and his Majesty would do all that in him lay, ‘*to encourage the linen manufacture there;*’ and they had the effect of inducing the parliament of Ireland to accede, as will appear from what follows:—

“The Lord Justices of Ireland say, in their speech to the Irish parliament, the 27th of September, 1698,‡ ‘Amongst those bills, there is one for the encouragement of the linen and hempen manufactures. At our first meeting we recommended to you that matter, and we have now endeavoured to render that

\* English Com. Jour., vol. xii. p. 338.

† English Com. Jour., vol. xii. p. 339.

‡ Irish Com. Jour., vol. ii. p. 241.



will practicable and useful for that effect, and as such we now recommend it to you. The settlement of this manufacture will contribute much to people the country, and will be found much more advantageous to this kingdom than the woollen manufacture; which, being the settled staple trade of England, can never be encouraged here for that purpose; *whereas the linen and hempen manufactures will not only be encouraged as consistent with the trade of England, but will render the trade of this kingdom both useful and necessary to England.*'

"The Commons replied,\* 'We pray leave to assure your excellencies, that we shall heartily endeavour to establish a linen and hempen manufacture here, and to render the same useful to England, as well as advantageous to this kingdom; and we hope to find such a *temperament* in respect to the woollen trade here, that the same may not be injurious to England.'

"In pursuance of this answer, they evinced that *temperament* most effectually, by passing an act† for laying prohibitory duties on the export of *their own* woollen manufacture—thus accepting the *national compact*, and fully performing their part of the agreement, and by that performance giving an incontrovertible claim to Ireland upon England, and consequently upon Great Britain, for a perpetual encouragement of the linen manufacture '*to all the advantage and profit that Ireland should at any time be capable of.*'

"It is to be observed, that so anxious was England for confirming and enforcing this ratification given by Ireland, that their parliament soon after passed a law affecting to enact what subsequent times have shown it was incompetent to, which we therefore here mention, merely to point out the stress which England laid on the sacrifice made by Ireland, of its great and natural staple trade, in exchange for a new staple, resting on a material, not the natural growth of the country, and the establishment of which was but in its infancy, though nurtured for near sixty years by the government of the kingdom. The act we refer to is the 10th and 11th William III. cap. 10, which recites, 'that wool, and the woollen manufacture of cloth, serge, bays, kerseys, and other stuffs, made or mixed with wool, are the greatest and most profitable commodities of the kingdom, on which the value of lands and the trade of the nation do chiefly depend; that great quantities of the *like manufactures* have, of late, been made, and *are daily increasing in the kingdom of Ireland*, and in the English plantations in America, and *are exported from thence to foreign markets, heretofore supplied from England*: all which inevitably tends to injure the value of lands, and to ruin the trade and the woollen manufacture of the realm; and that, for the prevention thereof, the export of wool, and the woollen manufacture, from Ireland, be prohibited, under the forfeiture of goods and ship, and a penalty of £500 for every such offence.'

"It is to be further observed, that the Irish were at the time of, and for two years previous to, this compact, in full possession, as already stated, of a preference for their linens over foreign in the British markets, to the amount of 25 per cent.; and we may add further, of a preference offered to British merchants and capitalists to export the Irish linens, rather than foreign, by part of those duties being retained on the export of the foreign, and not drawn back; and as far as we understand the acts upon the subject, we think we may confidently assert, that though this preference, from time to time, has varied both in quantity and in the mode, yet its principle has never ceased to exist; and from the time this nation exchanged its staple trade of woollen, for the assurance of '*every favour and protection which its linen manufacture should be capable of receiving,*' the linens of foreign countries have never been exportable from Great Britain, without a charge of duty upon them."

Without further adverting to the parliamentary arrangements that were made between Great Britain and Ireland, for the support of our linen manufacture, about which abundant details will be found in the ‡ history of both countries, it is enough to say, that in observance of them, the Lord Lieutenant of this country was always accustomed, at the opening of every session of the parlia-

\* Irish Com. Jour., vol. ii. p. 243.

† Irish Statutes, 10th William III. cap. 3, vol. iii. p. 472.

‡ English Jour. Lords and Com. 1696 to 1698, vols. xi. xii.; and Irish Com. Jour. 1774, vol. ix. cclxxxvii.

ment of Ireland, to recommend it to the attention of both houses in the speech\* from the throne.

"All these circumstances necessarily led to the linen manufacture of Ireland being an object of parliamentary support. The grant that was made for its uses consisted, for many years, of four sums, which were annually voted in the following words:—

1. A sum of £7,250 for one year, 'to encourage the growth of flax in this kingdom	£7,250	0	0
2. A further sum of £10,350 for one year, 'to be applied by the trustees in such manner as shall appear to them to be most conducive to promote and encourage the linen and hempen manufactures, the said sum to be in the place and stead of a like sum, paid to them out of the produce of the duties on tea and coffee	10,350	0	0
3. A further sum of £2,000 for one year, 'to encourage the raising sufficient quantities of hemp and flax in this kingdom'	2,000	0	0
4. A further sum of £2,000 for one year, 'for the encouragement of the hempen and flaxen manufactures in the provinces of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught'	2,000	0	0
	£21,600	0	0

"That these four grants are of long standing, will appear from the following history† of them:—

"1. In the year 1709, before the establishment of the Linen Board of Ireland,‡ an act was passed, 8th of Queen Anne, cap. 12,§ by which it was thus declared and enacted:—'Forasmuch as several acts of parliament made in this kingdom, especially an act made in the sixth year of her present Majesty's reign, entitled "an act for the encouragement and improvement of the hempen and flaxen manufactures," have been found, by experience, not to have fully and effectually answered the purposes for which they were intended, and that particularly because no mention is made, nor encouragement given, for flaxseed to be imported, which if granted, would greatly conduce to the improvement of the linen manufacture of this kingdom, be it therefore enacted, &c., that whosoever shall import, or cause to be imported, into this kingdom, any good and sound flaxseed, of the growth of Russia, Germany, the Netherlands, or East Country, shall receive for every hogshead of such flaxseed, a premium of five shillings.' In the year 1779–1780, a further act was passed, 19th and 20th George III. cap. 33,|| by which it is thus further declared and enacted:—'Whereas flaxseed raised in this kingdom is found to be of as good quality as any imported, and sufficient quantities could be raised therein, if the cultivation thereof were promoted and not discouraged by bounties on the importation of foreign flaxseed; and whereas the annual average amount of those bounties, for eight years past, appears to have been the sum of £7,250, be it enacted, &c., that no bounty shall henceforth be paid on account of any flaxseed or linseed imported into this kingdom, and that a sum after the rate of £7,250 shall be applied to encourage the growth of flaxseed and hempseed in this kingdom.' The trustees were required by this act to offer premiums, to the extent of £7,250, determining the portion thereof for each county.

"2. In the year 1719, an act was passed (6th Geo. I., cap. 4, sec. 7¶) by which an additional duty of one shilling was laid upon every pound weight of tea, and three pence upon every pound weight of coffee, chocolate, and cocoa nuts, imported into Ireland; and, by the eighth section of said act, it was enacted, that these 'additional duties, and all money arising therefrom, should be paid to the trustees appointed for the management of the hempen and flaxen manufactures of this kingdom, to be by them applied to encourage and support the said manufactures, and the trade thereof, in this kingdom.' Again, in the year 1780 (by the 19th and 20th Geo. III., cap. 33, sec. 7), it was enacted, that there should be levied, and paid, a duty of six pence a gallon, for and upon every gallon of linseed oil imported into Ireland, and 'that all money arising

\* The speech addressed from the throne to the last meeting of that parliament, contained these words:—"I recommend to your usual attention the agriculture, the manufactures, and particularly the linen manufacture of Ireland."—1800, vol. xix. p. 12. Although, since the Union, the linen manufacture has not been noticed in any speech from the throne, the same annual grant has been made for its support, that was given by the parliament of Ireland.

† *Id.* Printed Proceedings of the Linen Board, vol. 1823. App. p. 5.

‡ The Linen Board was established on the 10th of October, 1711, in the government of James, Duke of Ormond.

§ Irish Stat., vol. iv. p. 240.

¶ Irish Stat., vol. iv. p. 505.

|| *Ibid.*, vol. ix. p. 636.



thereby should be paid to the trustees, to be by them expended in further encouraging the raising of flaxseed or hempseed in this kingdom.' The *produce* of these duties has continued to be appropriated to the uses of the trustees, with the exception of the duties upon *tea* and *coffee*, which were *commuted* by the following acts, for the sums here stated. In the year 1767, an act was passed (7th Geo. III., cap. 2, sec 21\*), by which it was enacted, that 'so much of the yearly produce of the said duties arising upon *teas*, as shall amount to the sum of £10,000 yearly, shall, in the first place, be paid to the trustees of the hempen and linen manufactures in this kingdom, and so much of the *residue* of the produce of said duty as shall amount to the sum of £7,300 yearly, shall be placed to the account of the king's *hereditary revenue*.' The remainder of the produce was by said act directed to go towards discharging the interest of the then public debt of Ireland. The *tea* duties were afterwards discharged of this sum, and a like sum was created a charge by the 21, 22 Geo. III., cap. 1, sec. 26,† upon the *general revenues* of the country, for the use of the trustees 'to promote the said manufactures.' In the year 1788, under the 28th Geo. III., cap. 7, sec. 20,‡ it was enacted, that 'out of the duties charged by this act upon the importation of *coffee*, the sum of £350 shall be paid to the trustees, to be by them applied to encourage and support the said manufacture, and the trade thereof in this kingdom.' These two sums make together the sum of £10,350 already stated; and here it is to be remembered, that the general revenues of the country always gained, what the trustees lost by these commutations.§

\* Irish Stat., vol. ix. p. 501.

† Ibid., vol. xii. p. 11.

‡ Ibid., vol. xiv. p. 543.

§ The following statements, which have been taken from parliamentary returns, will afford some idea of the *revenue* which these duties *did* produce to the linen manufacture, and *do* now produce to the crown; and although, on the one hand, it is by no means contended, that the crown could have permitted these duties to remain to the uses of the linen trade, after they had become so productive as to form no unimportant portion of the general revenues of the country, yet, on the other hand, it is not altogether uninteresting to consider the value of such of them as the Linen Board have at different times been called upon to surrender, and of those that yet remain for the service of the linen manufacture.

TEA.—Take the three years, preceding the period of commuting the duty on this article, for a grant of £10,000 a-year.

Years ended 25th March.	Weight of tea imported.	Produce of duty, at 1s. per pound weight.
1764 - - -	204,891 lbs. - -	£10,244 11 0
1765 - - -	236,908 „ - -	11,845 8 0
1766 - - -	297,988 „ - -	14,899 8 0

The progressive increase in the produce of this duty may be collected, by looking to the amount of it for the last three years.

Years ended 5th January.	Weight of tea imported.	Produce of duty, at 1s. per pound weight.
1820 - - -	3,238,498 lbs. - -	£161,924 18 0
1821 - - -	3,150,158 „ - -	157,507 18 0
1822 - - -	3,493,960 „ - -	174,698 0 0

COFFEE.—Take, in like manner, the three years preceding the period of commuting the duty on this article, for a grant of £350 a-year.

Years ended 25th March.	Coffee imported.	Produce of duty at 3d. per pound weight.
	(a) cwt. qrs. lbs.	£ s. d.
1785 - - -	64 0 14 - -	89 15 6
1786 - - -	288 0 14 - -	403 7 6
1787 - - -	102 2 10 - -	143 2 6

The progressive increase of the produce of this duty, may, in like manner, be collected from looking to the amount of it for the last three years.

Years ended 5th January	Weight of coffee imported.	Produce of coffee at 3d. per pound weight.
1820 - - -	441,999 lbs. - -	£5,524 19 9
1821 - - -	234,265 „ - -	2,928 6 3
1822 - - -	243,425 „ - -	3,042 16 3

#### CHOCOLATE, COCOA NUTS, AND LINSEED-OIL:

The only duties (b) that remain to the uses of the trade, from the acts above stated, or any other acts, are those upon *Chocolate*, *Cocoa Nuts*, and *Linseed Oil*, after deducting thereout the

(a) These were the denominations of the quantity of Coffee in those years. It is now entered in pounds weight.

(b) Other duties were appropriated at different times to the linen manufacture, viz., *sixpence* a hide upon *raw* and *untanned hides* exported from Ireland, &c., but they have either expired without commutation, or have so long ceased to be productive, as to be no longer noticed in any revenue return.



"3. In the year 1723, an act was passed (10 Geo. I., cap. 1, sec. 13\*), whereby the sum of £2,000 was granted to the trustees, 'to encourage the raising of sufficient quantities of hemp and flax in this kingdom.'

"4. And, lastly, in the year 1733, an act was passed (7 Geo. II., cap. 1, sec. 9†), whereby a further sum of £2,000 was granted to the trustees, 'for the further encouragement of the flaxen and hempen manufactures in the provinces of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught.'

"Thus it appears, that this sum of £21,600 is partly composed of a sum granted in lieu of bounties formerly paid out of the general revenues of the country—of two sums given in exchange for duties, appropriated to the uses of the trade, the produce of which has since reverted to the crown—and of two grants made for the extension of the trade, particularly in the provinces of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, all of which took place in the successive reigns of Queen Anne and of their majesties Geo. I. and Geo. II.; and it further appears, that neither throughout the whole of the reign of his majesty Geo. III., the longest in the annals of the British monarchy, nor since the accession of his majesty Geo. IV., has any addition been made to this annual grant, for the maintenance of the STAPLE MANUFACTURE OF IRELAND.

"The parliament of the United Kingdom continued this grant of £21,600 appropriated in manner and terms above stated, down to the year 1807, in which year they granted the same sum *generally*, that is, without the usual *appropriations*, as will appear by reference to the 47th Geo. III., cap. 76, sec. 23, whereby it is enacted, 'that out of all or any the aids or supplies aforesaid, there shall and may be issued, and applied, any sum or sums of money, not exceeding *twenty-one thousand and six hundred pounds, Irish currency*, to be paid to the trustees of the linen and hempen manufactures in Ireland, for one year ending the 5th day of January, one thousand eight hundred and seven, to be by the said trustees applied *in such manner as shall appear to them to be most conducive to promote and encourage the said manufactures*.' This sum has been annually granted since, in the same *general terms*."

hereditary duty.—See 54 Geo. III., cap. 129, sec. 18. The hereditary duties are, viz.:—*Linseed Oil*, £3 the tun; *Chocolate*, 3d. the lb.; and *Cocoa Nuts*, 1½d. the lb.—*Hautenville's Digest of Customs*, 1821, p. 53. Of these duties, the *Cocoa Nuts* alone were productive in the last three years; their *net* produce was as follows:—

		£	s.	d.
Years ended 5th January, 1820,	-	269	10	4
" " 1821,	-	336	15	7
" " 1822,	-	477	6	9
		1,083	12	8
Average, $\frac{1}{3}$	-	£361	4	2

[From the Proceedings of the Linen Board of Ireland.]

JAMES CORRY.

\* Irish Stat., vol. v. p. 80.

† Ibid., vol. vi. p. 4.

## No. III.

*An account of the Net Revenue received from the Customs and Excise duties on the following articles in Great Britain and Ireland respectively, in each year from the year 1783; showing the rate of duty payable in each year, and showing the quantity of each article imported.*

TEA—GREAT BRITAIN.				TEA—IRELAND.			
Years.	Quantities retained for home consumption.	Total Net Revenue.			Years.	Quantities entered for home consumption.	Net revenue. Customs.
	lbs.	£	s.	D.		lbs.	£ s. D.
1784		...			1784	1,551,228	30,433 17 8
1785	{ Cannot be ascertained for these years. }	...			1785	1,635,216	31,795 16 3
1786		...			1786	1,866,240	37,170 16 7
1787		...			1787	1,680,325	32,504 14 1
1788		...			1788	1,543,900	29,708 17 8
1789	13,218,665	547,176	2	6	1789	1,970,898	38,038 14 3
1790	14,534,601	555,374	3	7	1790	1,736,796	33,132 12 2
1791	15,093,299	562,038	14	5	1791	1,736,796	33,132 12 2
1792	15,096,840	547,230	4	8	1792	1,994,787	43,295 12 4
1793	15,822,045	607,430	8	4	1793	1,844,598	35,110 0 8
1794	15,244,931	616,775	6	9	1794	2,148,755	39,274 9 6
1795	16,647,963	609,846	5	6	1795	2,041,290	43,892 6 2
1796	18,394,232	628,081	6	5	1796	2,970,701	64,093 16 10
1797	18,009,992	695,108	5	9	1797	2,326,306	48,633 14 9
1798	16,368,041	877,042	13	0	1798	2,492,254	60,817 6 5
1799	19,566,934	1,028,060	9	7	1799	2,953,240	103,016 5 5
1800	19,906,510	1,111,898	9	1	1800	2,873,717	101,727 11 0
1801	20,358,702	1,176,861	9	9	1801	2,926,166	69,824 17 7
1802	20,237,753	1,152,262	0	0	1802	3,499,801	135,852 3 4
1803	21,848,245	1,287,808	2	6	1803	3,576,775	182,214 17 7
1804	21,647,922	1,450,252	7	9	1804	3,239,937	172,355 15 6
1805	18,501,904	1,757,257	18	4	1805	3,337,122	251,734 8 9
1806	21,025,380	2,348,004	4	8	1806	3,267,712	411,225 1 4
1807	20,355,038	2,925,298	17	9	1807	2,611,458	348,242 7 2
1808	19,239,312	3,098,428	13	2	1808	3,555,129	476,949 4 3
1809	20,859,929	3,043,524	11	3	1809	3,706,771	534,685 1 7
1810	19,869,134	3,370,610	0	10	1810	3,391,663	462,088 12 3
1811	19,093,244	3,130,616	14	9	1811	2,922,568	435,307 10 2
1812	20,702,809	3,212,430	1	1	1812	3,517,884	502,816 16 11
1813	20,018,251	3,249,294	0	9	1813	3,758,499	567,186 11 6
1814	20,443,236	3,258,793	2	9	1814	3,522,942	521,299 12 3
1815	19,224,154	3,428,236	8	4	1815	3,387,012	529,818 7 11
1816	22,378,345	3,526,590	18	3	1816	3,462,776	531,500 15 2
1817	20,246,144	2,956,619	0	5	1817	2,990,580	405,777 16 3
1818	20,822,926	3,003,650	18	7	1818	3,141,035	427,713 7 3
1819	22,660,177	3,362,588	10	1	1819	2,562,431	510,105 6 6
1820	22,631,467	3,256,433	12	10	1820	3,238,498	433,371 11 6
1821	22,452,050	3,128,449	17	0	1821	3,150,344	398,742 5 4
1822	22,892,913	3,275,642	16	6	1822	3,493,960	462,819 16 3
1823	23,911,884	3,434,292	19	10	1823	3,816,966	511,299 5 2
1824	23,762,470	3,407,983	1	8	1824	3,367,710	440,139 4 11
1825	23,784,838	3,420,205	11	11	1825	3,387,510	445,271 15 11
1826	24,830,014	3,527,944	4	11	1826	3,889,658	503,074 13 4
1827	25,238,067	3,291,813	19	5	1827	3,807,785	446,229 5 1
1827	26,043,223	3,263,206	19	3	1827	3,887,955	442,382 14 10

The duty on tea in Ireland during these years was collected by the customs.

The English duty on tea in 1800 was 33 per cent. on the article when sold at or above 2s. 6d. per pound, and 15 per cent. on inferior qualities.

The Irish duty on tea in 1800 was 5½d. (Irish) on black, and 7d. on green.

TOBACCO—GREAT BRITAIN.				TOBACCO—IRELAND.			
Years.	Quantities retained for home consumption.	Total Net revenue.			Years.	Quantities entered for home consumption.	Total Net revenue.
	lbs.	£	s.	D.		lbs.	£ s. D.
1784	{ Cannot be ascertained for these years. }	...			1784	3,477,649	160,587 4 10
1785		...			1785	3,328,025	149,460 9 2
1786	6,846,606	...			1786	2,666,165	120,369 12 11
1787	6,669,103	380,793	5	3	1787	1,877,579	95,654 11 2
1788	6,858,668	441,429	19	7	1788	3,120,048	128,896 12 6
1789	8,152,185	408,037	4	1	1789	2,765,441	128,704 8 4
1790	8,960,224	512,383	7	1	1790	2,900,437	133,195 18 10
1791	9,340,875	585,966	9	1	1791	2,549,043	117,420 0 2
1792	8,979,221	582,096	7	7	1792	1,767,581	80,693 4 5
1793	8,617,967	547,217	14	4	1793	5,568,857	125,844 17 1
1794	9,723,536	606,262	12	10	1794	9,426,211	193,158 10 7
1795	10,972,368	659,989	3	4	1795	7,874,409	215,719 9 0
1796	10,047,843	755,451	15	1	1796	6,045,790	186,759 19 0
1797	9,822,439	813,027	16	2	1797	8,445,555	267,721 16 4
1798	10,286,741	867,302	14	0	1798	4,894,121	215,317 12 7
1799	10,993,113	799,369	14	2	1799	5,876,172	288,028 4 9
1800	11,796,415	987,110	8	8	1800	6,737,275	327,916 9 0
1801	10,514,998	923,855	3	5	1801	6,389,754	285,482 6 4
1802	12,121,278	928,678	9	1	1802	6,327,542	309,738 9 2
1803	12,587,570	1,028,563	16	1	1803	5,278,511	263,944 3 4
1804	12,254,494	1,060,319	18	0	1804	5,783,487	314,007 5 8
1805	12,656,471	1,088,821	4	5	1806	4,158,794	302,316 8 1
1806	12,435,035	1,185,830	14	1	1805	5,082,186	359,867 6 4
1807	12,432,994	1,336,542	17	9	1807	4,531,049	315,417 4 3
1808	12,876,119	1,448,296	3	7	1808	5,847,416	403,973 3 8
1809	13,054,870	1,325,154	5	7	1809	6,497,662	451,278 19 11
1810	14,108,193	1,599,376	18	9	1810	6,221,646	444,198 5 0
1811	14,923,243	1,701,848	8	2	1811	6,453,024	552,082 9 9
1812	15,043,533	1,679,912	2	2	1812	5,896,702	697,897 9 11
1813	13,648,245	...			1813	5,944,817	746,006 5 2
1814	10,503,917	1,581,684	12	9	1814	4,869,304	653,708 12 7
1815	13,207,192	1,764,487	7	10	1815	4,748,205	740,279 13 1
1816	12,815,808	2,035,109	2	8	1816	4,732,085	750,510 7 6
1817	13,593,089	2,158,500	3	10	1817	4,778,469	757,316 8 3
1818	13,688,437	2,173,866	19	2	1818	4,194,041	664,183 9 1
1819	12,911,285	2,285,045	2	10	1819	3,466,852	614,989 5 7
1820	13,016,562	2,610,972	7	9	1820	2,582,498	516,446 2 6
1821	12,983,198	2,600,415	7	8	1821	2,614,954	522,168 6 9
1822	12,970,566	2,599,155	15	1	1822	3,309,072	664,016 7 4
1823	13,418,554	2,695,009	15	0	1823	3,546,126	730,507 12 8
1824	13,083,094	2,627,955	12	6	1824	3,749,732	750,589 5 4
1825	14,510,555	2,530,617	6	3	1825	4,160,049	728,288 13 11
1826	13,784,370	2,077,875	14	7	1826	3,898,647	580,893 11 0
1827	14,711,891	2,223,340	18	4	1827	4,041,172	603,037 18 9

Tobacco was liable to an English duty, in 1800, of 1s. 6d. per pound.  
The Irish duty on tobacco was, at the same period, 7d. (Irish.)



FOREIGN SPIRITS—GREAT BRITAIN.				FOREIGN SPIRITS—IRELAND.			
Years.	Quantities retained for home consumption.		Total Net revenue.	Years.	Quantities retained for home consumption.		Net revenue. Customs.
	Brandy and Geneva.	Rum.			Brandy and Geneva.	Rum.	
	Wine gallons.	Wine gallons.	£ s. d.		Wine galls.	Wine galls.	£ s. d.
1784	644,000	927,309	...	1784	461,802	883,858	228,153 10 10
1785	878,404	1,387,170	...	1785	434,093	952,767	928,236 6 2
1786	929,422	1,551,956	...	1786	377,695	797,704	193,954 3 1
1787	1,296,067	1,647,190	816,868 11 10	1787	380,696	905,862	210,394 3 1
1788	2,203,199	1,846,952	924,888 19 9	1788	373,420	992,103	221,849 10 9
1789	2,002,626	2,160,183	952,392 13 5	1789	304,532	1,077,829	219,774 9 3
1790	2,225,405	2,274,533	1,001,415 17 4	1790	293,208	886,190	182,165 6 5
1791	1,949,418	2,505,472	999,481 3 11	1791	152,234	589,948	144,915 19 5
1792	1,984,822	1,812,108	1,008,098 3 5	1792	132,851	501,984	117,910 19 5
1793	1,557,876	2,202,133	1,002,976 16 11	1793	117,524	301,150	82,784 6 10
1794	1,667,721	2,590,365	1,100,504 1 5	1794	104,022	463,804	108,529 7 7
1795	949,606	2,468,818	957,512 7 6	1795	32,374	257,874	54,815 12 0
1796	1,237,188	1,885,706	1,049,610 18 2	1796	13,716	111,475	23,665 13 8
1797	1,669,787	2,142,047	1,317,520 8 6	1797	744	72,120	12,844 3 7
1798	1,521,179	1,712,512	1,305,937 2 9	1798	8,426	113,313	25,327 17 11
1799	1,618,855	2,076,586	1,423,961 4 11	1799	14,765	348,880	83,766 0 1
1800	2,172,618	2,622,837	1,895,481 14 3	1800	204,494	1,036,467	331,833 3 0
1801	2,631,055	2,445,032	2,202,123 2 3	1801	368,334	1,239,696	483,227 4 0
1802	2,806,736	3,208,378	2,534,152 11 10	1802	111,156	741,528	254,249 5 8
1803	2,763,575	3,543,997	2,668,884 5 8	1803	43,552	292,444	107,876 19 4
1804	1,606,635	1,960,620	2,163,105 19 10	1804	22,137	203,837	83,213 19 8
1805	1,991,002	2,220,566	2,613,885 8 0	1805	24,408	146,430	71,225 17 9
1806	2,439,793	2,455,952	3,094,477 12 0	1806	18,721	188,322	107,024 11 11
1807	2,200,728	2,671,935	3,119,777 8 11	1807	16,680	251,449	183,306 17 11
1808	2,758,676	2,897,513	3,882,304 6 8	1808	27,089	410,721	595,692 14 6
1809	1,172,211	3,060,664	2,790,378 14 1	1809	82,986	1,273,250	187,742 6 2
1810	2,146,055	3,641,998	3,850,938 2 11	1810	26,499	401,870	80,262 14 4
1811	1,329,467	3,615,570	3,121,766 15 7	1811	5,108	180,348	154,575 8 10
1812	224,896	4,191,467	2,601,445 8 10	1812	9,936	339,762	259,920 3 5
1813	287,050	3,944,613	...	1813	13,777	555,609	70,260 17 3
1814	373,009	4,336,284	2,926,113 0 11	1814	15,885	109,385	50,027 0 10
1815	1,016,462	3,962,108	3,193,677 13 6	1815	11,527	77,800	17,656 0 1
1816	913,242	2,889,600	2,495,658 14 9	1816	7,896	22,843	24,684 6 6
1817	887,400	2,853,847	2,454,997 16 9	1817	7,258	36,823	21,647 8 8
1818	773,805	3,133,031	2,502,804 11 5	1818	11,117	25,639	25,175 15 1
1819	1,067,934	3,047,877	2,735,315 8 0	1819	12,245	30,882	21,144 11 7
1820	1,137,517	2,963,221	2,755,604 19 7	1820	11,290	24,468	20,652 8 0
1821	1,204,888	2,766,250	2,711,670 14 1	1821	11,190	23,622	18,495 2 9
1822	1,308,332	2,678,838	2,112,506 18 10	1822	12,270	18,042	32,885 2 6
1823	1,392,065	2,798,494	2,909,590 18 1	1823	30,338	21,806	7,777 4 8
1824	1,579,484	3,051,362	3,089,121 1 5	1824	1,675	11,343	11,637 1 0
1825	1,686,043	2,502,671	2,866,244 8 3	1825	5,460	12,038	
1826	Imp. gallons.	Imp. galls.	3,529,160 14 8	1826	Imp. gallons.	Imp. galls.	22,505 12 8
	*1,540,322	4,277,558			*9,449	27,751	
1827	Wine gallons.	Wine galls.	2,915,432 5 4	1827	Wine gallons.	Wine galls.	20,230 5 4
	*1,848,386	5,133,070			*11,342	33,310	
1827	Imp. gallons.	Imp. galls.	2,915,432 5 4	1827	Imp. gallons.	Imp. galls.	20,230 5 4
	*1,364,065	3,263,507			*9,179	23,240	
1827	Wine gallons.	Wine galls.	2,915,432 5 4	1827	Wine gallons.	Wine galls.	20,230 5 4
	*1,636,878	3,916,308			*11,015	27,888	

No excise duty on foreign spirits in Ireland during these years.

\* These amounts are written in red ink in the MS. copy.

The duty on brandy and Geneva in England, in 1800, was 8s. 5d. per gallon, and on rum, 6s. 11d.

The Irish duty on brandy and Geneva, in 1800, was 7s. 3d., and on rum, 5s. 8d.

WINE—GREAT BRITAIN.					WINE—IRELAND.				
Years.	Quantities retained for home consumption.	Total Net revenue.			Years.	Quantities retained for home consumption.	Net revenue. Customs.		
	Wine gallons.	£	s.	d.		Wine gallons.	£	s.	d.
1784	{ Cannot be ascertained for these years. }	...			1784	1,069,232	105,211	7	3
1785		...			1785	777,678	81,762	8	2
1786		...			1786	921,023	96,076	4	6
1787		3,958,750	701,545	12	1	1787	1,467,579	147,363	17
1788		6,761,403	666,134	11 10	1788	1,219,370	121,914	4	5
1789		5,814,665	721,518	19 3	1789	1,336,253	130,187	8	4
1790		6,492,317	820,562	7 4	1790	1,428,929	138,589	12	7
1791		7,658,276	916,769	0 5	1791	1,430,272	138,010	7	9
1792		8,082,249	1,019,645	3 0	1792	1,339,800	129,110	5	6
1793		6,890,910	690,686	5 2	1793	1,041,932	94,506	18	8
1794		6,799,220	795,023	19 0	1794	1,374,429	117,839	2	3
1795		6,927,121	1,430,722	15 1	1795	2,959,004	264,165	5	6
1796		5,732,383	1,159,523	19 7	1796	1,199,129	128,728	9	6
1797		3,970,901	1,383,665	12 8	1797	312,212	41,308	3	1
1798		4,760,657	1,372,661	6 7	1798	1,558,265	184,489	12	6
1799		4,777,631	1,692,826	12 0	1799	2,588,166	343,194	13	1
1800		7,728,871	1,967,213	8 5	1800	1,024,832	157,494	13	0
1801		7,006,310	1,992,997	9 11	1801	1,245,742	192,663	18	4
1802		6,355,749	1,931,872	19 9	1802	2,180,350	348,199	14	9
1803		6,181,466	2,141,356	12 9	1803	1,690,291	282,572	0	2
1804		4,840,719	1,814,323	5 5	1804	1,708,510	327,130	13	10
1805		4,565,551	2,003,866	8 4	1805	981,690	251,927	19	3
1806		5,936,235	2,320,428	11 8	1806	1,053,979	254,102	7	8
1807		5,922,337	2,334,197	18 9	1807	1,603,278	395,689	2	4
1808		6,408,534	2,353,736	19 1	1808	1,189,716	294,736	14	9
1809		5,808,087	2,361,113	18 3	1809	1,264,926	324,889	10	5
1810		6,805,276	2,513,615	16 3	1810	1,020,275	272,971	12	7
1811		5,860,874	2,169,871	6 3	1811	894,792	263,136	8	5
1812		5,136,490	1,911,352	19 11	1812	892,946	287,065	7	4
1813		4,718,568	...		1813	760,004	253,765	1	6
1814		4,941,663	2,032,840	19 4	1814	636,137	234,736	7	3
1815		5,968,435	2,095,299	18 0	1815	730,351	293,091	11	3
1816		4,420,807	1,610,299	5 8	1816	439,602	167,158	2	0
1817		5,614,622	2,023,720	8 2	1817	571,596	200,891	11	11
1818		6,139,490	2,241,380	2 7	1818	624,206	225,935	10	10
1819		4,978,600	1,802,027	1 11	1819	589,854	203,261	19	7
1820		5,019,960	1,818,396	2 5	1820	508,501	169,421	5	5
1821		5,016,569	0,797,491	7 10	1821	624,701	209,006	11	0
1822		4,975,159	0,794,013	11 2	1822	569,038	188,868	0	6
1823		5,291,410	0,007,466	13 0	1823	547,218	180,764	16	11
1824		5,479,732	0,067,953	13 13	1824	564,529	185,158	11	4
1825		8,676,600	0,015,053	8 5	1825	952,977	140,655	7	1
1826	Imperial galls.	5,389,665	1,270,118	1 6	1836	Imperial galls.	685,361	155,161	12 6
	Wine gallons.	6,467,559				Wine gallons.	822,433		
1827	Imperial galls.	6,094,178	1,426,550	11 9	1827	Imperial galls.	782,274	174,036	16 7
	Wine gallons.	7,312,955				Wine gallons.	929,629		

The duty on Portuguese, Madeira, and Spanish wines, in 1800, was 2s. 6d. per wine gallon, in England.

The Irish duty on Portuguese, Madeira, and Spanish wines, at the same period, was £41 10s. 11d., per tun, Irish measure.

SUGAR—GREAT BRITAIN.				SUGAR—IRELAND.				Gross revenue.
Years.	Quantities retained for home consumption.	Net revenue. Customs.		Years.	Quantities entered for home consumption.	Revenue. Customs.		
	cwts.	£ s. D.			cwts.	£ s. D.		
1784	{ Records destroyed by fire. }	{ Records destroyed by fire. }		1784	190,483	120,312	0 6	}
1785	1,752,006	Do.		1785	233,494	147,988	5 8	
1786	1,373,050	Do.		1786	162,104	102,744	7 6	
1787	1,596,755	965,353	13 1	1787	259,939	169,929	12 9	
1788	1,775,681	1,033,436	19 3	1788	196,633	125,383	9 11	
1789	1,547,109	862,632	11 11	1789	191,748	125,431	6 1	
1790	1,536,232	908,954	17 4	1790	211,977	136,125	1 3	
1791	1,403,211	1,074,903	16 5	1791	214,168	139,443	5 5	
1792	1,361,592	1,012,538	12 1	1792	161,302	120,616	1 0	
1793	1,677,097	1,316,502	14 3	1793	196,371	148,790	6 4	
1794	1,489,392	1,031,492	4 2	1794	209,642	159,359	13 5	
1795	1,336,230	949,961	16 1	1795	227,978	171,666	12 10	
1796	1,554,062	1,225,213	7 5	1796	182,668	137,179	18 3	
1797	1,273,722	1,299,744	0 7	1797	231,233	204,464	19 8	
1798	1,476,552	1,794,990	15 9	1798	228,838	180,008	16 9	
1799	2,772,438	2,321,935	16 5	1799	263,603	233,203	5 6	
1800	1,506,921	1,835,112	11 1	1800	355,662	327,028	13 7	
1801	2,773,795	2,782,232	18 1	1801	298,069	283,930	0 7	
1802	2,250,311	2,210,801	6 11	1802	329,150	394,261	15 5	
1803	1,492,565	1,551,457	17 11	1803	286,907	295,842	18 11	
1804	2,144,369	2,458,124	18 3	1804	313,710	381,753	10 7	
1805	2,076,103	2,439,795	1 10	1805	295,724	397,617	9 4	
1806	2,801,747	3,097,590	3 6	1806	267,805	373,039	11 4	
1807	2,277,665	3,150,753	6 3	1807	369,598	525,583	1 5	
1808	2,842,813	4,177,916	3 4	1808	437,867	582,404	19 3	
1809	2,504,507	3,273,995	2 3	1809	408,525	550,641	1 2	
1810	3,489,312	3,117,330	12 9	1810	292,512	394,185	4 5	
1811	3,226,757	3,339,218	4 3	1811	420,679	578,945	12 6	
1812	2,604,019	3,939,939	17 2	1812	450,713	629,167	5 2	}
1813	2,209,063	3,446,560	4 5	1813	389,654	570,420	5 7	
1814	1,997,999	3,276,513	6 5	1814	327,102	491,010	16 6	
1815	1,888,965	2,957,403	2 4	1815	324,478	496,930	17 4	
1816	2,228,156	3,166,841	18 0	1816	302,387	445,341	9 10	
1817	2,960,794	3,967,154	5 0	1817	338,415	466,771	19 5	
1818	1,457,707	2,331,472	3 5	1818	269,477	419,634	19 6	
1819	2,474,738	3,507,844	11 4	1819	346,292	488,699	6 4	
1820	2,581,256	3,477,770	11 4	1820	320,733	447,617	5 1	
1821	2,676,274	3,660,567	6 7	1821	380,690	528,391	12 4	
1822	2,618,490	3,579,412	12 1	1822	370,822	481,031	11 4	
1823	2,842,676	4,022,782	4 1	1823	386,315	384,628	2 2	
1824	2,957,261	4,223,240	18 5	1824	410,163	411,704	4 0	
1825	2,655,959	3,756,654	0 1	1825	423,889	420,001	2 9	
1826	3,255,075	4,518,690	15 9	1826	318,915	432,307	11 1	
1827	3,021,191	4,218,623	6 7	1827	319,736	431,568	19 5	

The English duty on plantation sugar was £1 per cwt. in 1800.  
The Irish duty on plantation sugar was 19s. 7d. (Irish) in 1800.



COFFEE—GREAT BRITAIN.			COFFEE—IRELAND.		
Years.	Quantities retained for home consumption.	Total Net revenue.	Years.	Quantities entered for home consumption.	Net revenue. Customs.
	lbs.	£ s. d.		lbs.	£ s. d.
1784	595,672	Records destroyed by fire.	1784	7,182	314 4 9
1785	75,264		1785	32,270	631 9 4
1786	...		1786	11,490	538 14 8
	From 10th May, 1787.				
1787	108,677	18,233 0 4	1787	12,530	662 4 2
1788	758,403	41,330 9 6	1788	38,458	887 11 6
1789	930,141	46,286 17 11	1789	82,121	1,897 8 5
1790	973,110	50,799 7 4	1790	59,372	1,370 2 6
1791	1,047,276	57,659 5 11	1791	84,882	1,958 16 4
1792	946,666	48,825 6 2	1792	40,313	930 6 0
1793	1,070,438	67,357 11 9	1793	52,164	1,203 16 5
1794	969,512	74,430 4 6	1794	100,172	2,450 2 9
1795	1,054,588	65,788 3 7	1795	91,803	2,118 10 9
1796	396,953	30,048 6 11	1796	61,571	1,420 17 3
1797	637,001	92,469 3 11	1797	132,755	3,063 11 8
1798	697,487	78,966 6 9	1798	37,463	864 10 4
1799	682,432	74,001 2 2	1799	49,569	1,144 16 10
1800	822,590	142,867 11 5	1800	120,985	2,791 19 5
1801	750,861	106,076 2 7	1801	127,842	2,961 6 6
1802	829,435	72,183 2 3	1802	87,492	2,262 14 6
1803	905,532	72,093 15 8	1803	49,432	1,387 14 2
1804	1,061,327	151,388 0 11	1804	243,494	9,969 17 10
1805	1,201,736	120,172 18 7	1805	61,251	3,730 7 5
1806	1,157,014	152,759 6 9	1806	55,490	3,760 10 4
1807	1,170,164	161,245 11 4	1807	72,274	4,866 13 5
1808	1,069,691	229,738 16 8	1808	136,713	6,897 4 2
1809	9,251,837	245,886 8 4	1809	310,833	9,065 19 2
1810	5,308,096	175,567 1 4	1810	228,357	6,660 7 11
1811	6,390,122	212,820 12 10	1811	529,993	15,458 2 9
1812	8,118,734	255,184 7 1	1812	505,497	14,759 14 1
1813	8,788,601	...	1813	446,787	14,159 0 7
1814	6,324,267	213,513 18 4	1814	283,724	9,382 9 9
1815	6,117,311	258,762 18 3	1815	325,098	10,497 17 7
1816	7,557,471	290,834 0 11	1816	253,712	8,192 15 5
1817	8,688,726	298,540 5 1	1817	513,248	16,075 12 3
1818	7,967,857	250,106 4 10	1818	340,880	10,960 6 4
1819	7,429,352	292,154 8 10	1819	361,431	13,842 17 1
1820	6,896,286	340,223 6 7	1820	207,123	10,276 8 3
1821	7,327,283	371,252 5 6	1821	265,718	13,322 18 11
1822	7,404,204	374,596 19 7	1822	265,147	12,862 1 6
1823	8,209,245	416,324 3 9	1823	245,655	12,298 11 6
1824	7,993,040	407,544 4 3	1824	269,883	13,443 19 8
1825	10,766,112	307,204 14 2	1825	316,858	8,604 16 1
1826	12,728,227	324,667 11 1	1826	475,096	11,903 5 4
1827	14,980,637	384,994 13 2	1827	585,739	14,695 13 3

The English plantation coffee duty, in 1800, was 1s. 5d. per pound.

The Irish coffee duty was £2 16s. per cwt. at the same period.

The duties on all the foregoing articles have been the same in both countries since 1814.

## No. IV.

## BRITISH AND IRISH REVENUE, FROM 1801 TO 1841.

*An account of the gross receipts of revenue within the year, after deducting repayments, allowances, discounts, drawbacks, and bounties in the nature of drawbacks, for Great Britain and Ireland, for each year from 1801 to 1841; and a statement of the proportions that Irish payments bore to English, calculated in periods of five years each.*

In the years	Gross payments of ordinary revenues into the Exchequer, as stated in the returns laid before the select committee on the public income and expenditure in 1828, and in the annual finance accounts.		Proportion of Irish payments to British, calculated in periods of five years each.
	In Great Britain.	In Ireland.	
1802	36,924,627	3,545,631	Total in the four years, from 1802 to 1805, £185,675,416, of which the proportion of Irish revenue was about one-thirteenth.
1803	38,231,619	3,158,237	
1804	45,867,417	3,822,960	
1805	50,500,144	3,624,781	
	171,523,807	14,151,609	
1806	54,167,615	4,087,561	Total in the five years, from 1806 to 1810, £329,761,042, of which the proportion of Irish revenue was about one-fourteenth.
1807	58,720,880	4,862,960	
1808	62,697,886	4,907,828	
1809	63,831,453	4,804,803	
1810	67,417,777	4,262,279	
	306,835,611	22,925,431	Total in the five years, from 1811 to 1815, £366,803,151, of which the proportion of Irish revenue was about one-thirteenth.
1811	65,300,063	4,893,150	
1812	63,705,323	5,531,533	
1813	67,600,314	5,775,640	
1814	70,320,017	6,219,169	
1815	70,953,122	6,504,820	Total in the five years, from 1816 to 1820, £297,800,244, of which the proportion of Irish revenue was about one-twelfth.
	337,878,839	28,924,312	
1816	61,973,894	4,529,150	
1817	51,614,484	5,285,654	
1818	52,964,336	5,392,774	
1819	51,829,694	5,064,730	Total in the five years, from 1821 to 1825, £292,575,901, of which the proportion of Irish revenue was about one-thirteenth.
1820	54,553,672	4,591,826	
	272,936,110	24,864,134	
1821	56,607,179	5,039,719	
1822	54,374,638	4,662,933	
1823	52,937,690	4,114,006	Total in the five years, from 1826 to 1830, £266,171,354, of which the proportion of Irish revenue was about one-thirteenth.
1824	53,270,027	4,265,738	
1825	52,829,274	4,455,697	
	270,038,808	22,538,093	
1826	50,526,152	4,313,534	
1827	53,928,220	4,489,509	Total in the five years, from 1831 to 1835, £265,090,658, of which the proportion of Irish revenue was about one-thirteenth.
1828	56,405,443	4,734,292	
1829	54,902,200	4,462,831	
1830	54,844,096	4,298,155	
	270,607,111	22,298,321	
1831	49,836,355	4,414,085	Total in the five years, from 1836 to 1840, £265,090,658, of which the proportion of Irish revenue was about one-thirteenth.
1832	49,571,460	4,435,098	
1833	48,410,467	4,160,649	
1834	48,307,792	4,445,455	
1835	47,948,282	4,641,711	
	244,074,356	22,096,998	Total in the five years, from 1836 to 1840, £265,090,658, of which the proportion of Irish revenue was about one-thirteenth.
1836	50,174,896	4,798,781	
1837	46,768,044	4,519,693	
1838	48,308,547	4,670,690	
1839	48,768,850	4,576,649	
1840	47,402,223	4,102,285	Total in the five years, from 1836 to 1840, £265,090,658, of which the proportion of Irish revenue was about one-thirteenth.
	242,422,560	22,668,098	

## No. V.

*A return of the number of bushels of malt on which the duty has been charged, in each year, from 1810 to 1840, both years inclusive, up to the 10th day of April in each year, in England, Ireland, and Scotland, separately and together.*

Years ended April 5.	Number of bushels of malt.			
	England.	Ireland.	Scotland.	Total.
1810	23,541,291	3,033,302	784,527	27,359,120
1811	25,979,328	2,437,859	968,100	29,385,287
1812	22,066,782	2,637,341	893,707	25,597,830
1813	18,945,766	2,159,326	658,657	21,763,749
1814	23,656,035	3,342,512	1,140,042	28,128,589
1815	26,349,263	3,025,066	1,319,472	30,693,801
1816	26,856,102	2,232,406	1,258,061	30,346,569
1817	17,820,324	1,680,219	1,142,539	20,643,082
1818	24,217,175	1,403,336	1,167,619	26,788,130
1819	22,325,607	1,879,082	1,442,613	25,647,302
1820	24,739,371	1,734,647	1,400,309	27,874,327
1821	26,084,730	1,869,758	1,225,883	29,180,371
1822	24,848,630	1,822,125	1,077,536	27,748,291
1823	27,312,755	1,811,490	1,429,188	30,553,433
1824	26,064,802	1,840,196	2,014,035	29,919,833
1825	27,887,092	2,279,188	2,784,477	32,950,757
1826	29,181,241	2,701,358	3,724,919	35,607,518
1827	25,342,913	2,142,530	2,490,067	29,975,510
1828	28,738,524	2,046,642	3,194,336	33,982,502
1829	28,217,125	2,266,226	3,713,490	34,196,841
1830	22,821,035	2,079,468*	3,944,406	28,844,909
1831	29,079,758	1,892,082*	4,089,127	35,060,967
1832	34,115,332	2,115,435*	4,105,377	40,336,144
1833	32,249,892	1,970,058*	3,767,242	37,987,192
1834	34,061,263	2,049,407*	4,406,913	40,517,583
1835	34,072,665	2,152,138*	4,437,220	40,662,023
1836	38,261,833	2,511,231*	4,736,449	45,509,513
1837	35,657,887	2,268,475*	4,751,594	42,677,956
1838	33,620,593	2,279,069*	4,480,792	40,380,454
1839	33,687,302	2,101,744*	4,567,083	40,356,129
1840	34,086,055	1,604,307	4,309,656	40,000,018

G. A. COTTRELL, First General Acct.

Excise Office, London, June 27, 1840.

THE END.



THE  
RIGHTS OF IRELAND.



THIRD PRIZE REPEAL ESSAY.

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THE

# RIGHTS OF IRELAND;

BY THE REV. J. GODKIN.

"Woe to the land on whose judgment-seats the stranger sits—at whose gates the stranger watches! Woe to the land divided against itself, and relying on foreigners!"—ZSCHOKKE.

DUBLIN:

PUBLISHED BY JAMES DUFFY,

23, ANGLESEA-STREET.

1845.



# STAY WITH ME

## ADVERTISEMENT.

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As it is not unlikely that some persons will condemn this Essay without reading it, I wish to guard against misrepresentation, by stating here, that I advocate an Irish Parliament only on the following *conditions* :—

First, that it can be obtained by peaceful and constitutional means; secondly, that the Irish Protestants, generally, shall concur in demanding it; thirdly, that inviolable security be given that neither the Church of Rome nor any other church shall ever be established or endowed in this country, but that the voluntary principle shall be embodied in the Irish constitution as it is in that of the United States of America.

These conditions have been expressly proposed again and again by the Repeal Association, which is emphatically and solemnly pledged to provide every possible safeguard for the freedom of Protestants.

Perfect religious liberty and equality being thus guaranteed, I believe a Native Parliament would confer blessings on this nation, which it is vain to expect from Imperial Legislation. But on this point the Essay will speak for itself. It is a hearty defence of my beloved country, and I am willing to bear whatever it may cost me.

THE AUTHOR.

Dublin, May, 1845.





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## ERRATA.

The reader is requested to correct the following :

Page 4 and 6, Note to "Lord Lyttleton's Henry II.," *add* vol. iii. pp. 17, 26,  
27, Dublin edition of 1772.

— 91, line 3, *for* "thence formed" *read* "thenceforward."

— 123, line 3 from bottom, *for* "constitution" *read* "contribution."

— 137, line 15, *for* "also" *read* "always."

— 139, line 10, *for* "it" *read* "she."

— 141, 2nd paragraph, *strike out* "his educational measures."

— 148, 1st line, 2nd paragraph, *supply* "if" before "Ireland."

THE

# RIGHTS OF IRELAND.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE ANCIENT IRISH NATION.

“The Irish nation possesses genuine history several centuries more ancient than any other European nation possesses in its present spoken language.”

SIR JAMES MAC INTOSH.

IT becomes nations as well as individuals “not to think of themselves more highly than they ought, but to think soberly.” Self-exaggeration detracts from their character without adding to their power. But a far greater and more dangerous fault is an habitual depreciation of their real resources, and a consequent want of self-reliance. This *was* the failing of the Irish—a degrading conviction written on the nation’s heart with the iron pen of persecution; but thanks, under Providence, to O’CONNELL, and the struggles of the last 40 years, this *internal* record of slavery—this fatal lesson of conscious imbecility, has been obliterated for ever!

An independent people, reposing calmly in their own strength, may smile in quiet scorn at attempts made to defame them. But it is otherwise when calumny is the standing plea of oppression, when libel is called in to justify robbery, and loss of character is loss of liberty. England has acted towards Ireland the part of an unjust and rapacious guardian, suborning witnesses to swear away the sanity of her ward, that she might, with impunity, denude her of her rights and property, and then make her the butt of ridicule. This has lasted so long that,



perhaps, there is no feeling more deeply seated in the British mind, than *contempt* of the Irish!—We grant that of late years this feeling has been considerably mitigated by the bolder tone and attitude of its object, and the increasing intelligence and liberality of the English people. But that it is far enough from being eradicated, is quite evident from the manner in which English journals are prone to treat the gravest Irish questions. Arguments which they cannot refute, and will not grapple with honestly, are met only with the sneers of pride, the threats of power, and a perpetual effort at the *argumentum ad absurdum*.

By arts like these, pursued by the ruling nation for a series of ages, many Irishmen have been made ashamed of their country, regarding every thing English as respectable—basely worshipping the power that crushed their kindred, and joining most heartily in the unnatural work of vilification—“of slandering ‘their own mother’s sons.’” They have kept alive the accursed fire of domestic animosity, but for which, Ireland would have been long since free. There was, indeed, a time when that baleful fire was almost extinguished—when Protestant and Catholic, Whig and Tory, joined hands together in one great national brotherhood. But, says an enlightened and impartial historian, “this spirit of mutual toleration was considered by the English government as extremely formidable; and it employed all its policy to destroy it, and to revive *the old religious and national animosities*.”\* How fatally has this wicked policy worked since 1782! There are indications abroad, however, that it will not avail much longer. “It is well that internecine bigotry should sleep the sleep of death—it is well that long worshipped and monstrous prejudices, the hideous idols of civil feuds, should crumble and vanish; it is well that men should prefer to enlarge upon *the interests and hopes of their common country*, to dwelling contentiously upon their own present distinctions and ancient civil quarrels.”†

Among the anomalies which so strangely mark the condition of Ireland, there is none more striking than the general ignorance of her history; although by an intimate knowledge of this alone, can these anomalies be accounted for. No man can understand the “*difficulties*” of Ireland, or solve the vexed questions of her social state, without deeply pondering the whole course of her past misgovernment. Therefore it is that I feel bound to invite the reader’s serious attention to the following rapid historical sketch: whether he be English or Irish,

\* Thierry’s History of the Norman Conquest. *Conclusion*, sect. 4.

† Dublin Warder, October 19, 1844.

Protestant or Catholic, it will, I trust, contribute to raise this unhappy country in his estimation, and lead him to abhor the misrule, of which it has been for so many ages the bound and bleeding victim.

That the imagination of a people so long afflicted as the Irish, should dwell much in the past, and clothe their ancient state in too bright a glory, is but natural. It is an extreme to which they would be driven by the systematic efforts made to vilify and degrade their forefathers, to destroy their ancient monuments, to proscribe their primitive and noble language, and to abolish their national institutions, laws, and customs. Yet, when candid criticism, or even supercilious scepticism, has done its utmost in the work of disparagement, enough of authentic history will still remain to testify that for many ages Ireland stood at the head of the nations of Europe, as the dispenser of learning and civilization, and the zealous propagator of the purest Christianity of the times. It is necessary to investigate this matter, that we may see what our country lost and gained by the English conquest. I shall not quote from enthusiastic and credulous Irish authors; but from Protestants, for the most part English—men belonging to the highest rank in literature, and, assuredly, labouring under no bias in favour of Ireland.

Edmund Spencer, the celebrated poet, who was chief secretary of Ireland, and gave his sanction to the most diabolical plans for the extirpation of her people, wrote as follows in his ‘View of the State of Ireland’ :—“All the customs of the Irish, which I have often noted, and compared with what I have read, would minister occasion of a most ample discourse of the original of them, and the antiquity of that people, which, in the truth, I think to be more ancient than most that I know in this end of the world.” Elsewhere in the same work, he declares that Ireland is “a nation so antique as that no monument remains of her beginning and first inhabiting.” “*It is certain* that Ireland hath had *the use of letters* very anciently, and **LONG BEFORE ENGLAND.**”\*

This is a glorious fact for Ireland; and it is sustained by other authorities not less eminent. Camden states that “from thence (Ireland) our old *Saxon* ancestors seem to have had the form of their letters, as they plainly used *the same* characters which are at present in use among the Irish.” But is it not more likely that the Irish should have borrowed from the Saxons? No;—for Dr Johnson, the best of judges, observes—“What was the form of the *Saxon* language, when, about the year 450, they first entered Britain, cannot

now be well known. They seem to have been a people without learning, and, *very probably, without an alphabet.*” \* As the Venerable Bede, Alcuin, and others describe the ancient Irish as “an inoffensive nation, and always *most friendly* to the English,” it is natural to infer that such zealous propagandists as the former imparted the knowledge of letters—the alphabet—to the Saxons. The fact, however, is distinctly stated by the learned Lord Lyttleton in his *Life of Henry II.* :—  
 “A school was formed at Armagh, which soon became very famous. Many Irish went from thence to convert and teach other nations. Many Saxons out of England resorted thither for instruction, AND BROUGHT FROM THENCE THE USE OF LETTERS TO THEIR IGNORANT COUNTRYMEN.”

He also adds—“We learn from Bede, an Anglo-Saxon, that about the seventh century, numbers, both of the noble and second rank of English, left their country, and retired out of England into Ireland, for the sake of studying theology, or leading there a stricter life; and all these, he affirms, the Irish (whom he calls Scots) most willingly received *and maintained at their own charge; supplying them with books, and being their teachers without fee or reward*; which is a most honourable testimony, not only to the learning, but also to the hospitality and bounty of that nation. Great praise is likewise due to the piety of those Irish ecclesiastics, who (as we know from the clear and unquestionable testimony of many foreign writers) made themselves the apostles of barbarous heathen nations, without any apparent inducement to such hazardous undertakings, except the merit of the work. By the preaching of these men the Northumbrians, the East Angles, and the Northern Picts, were converted. Convents were also founded by them in Burgundy, Germany, and other foreign countries, where they distinguished themselves by the rigid integrity and purity of their lives; so that Ireland, from the opinion conceived of their sanctity, was called the Country of Saints.”

Camden says—“No men came up to the Irish monks in Ireland *and in Britain*, for sanctity and *learning*; and they sent forth swarms of holy men all over Europe: to whom the monasteries of Luxueil in Burgundy, Pavia in Italy, Wurtzburgh in Franconia, St. Gall in Switzerland, &c., &c., owe their origin. \* \* \* Why should I mention almost all Ireland with its crowd of philosophers, despising the dangers of the sea, and flocking to our shores? \* \* \* The Saxons also at that time flocked to Ireland from all quarters, as to a mart of literature. Whence we frequently meet in our writers



of the lives of the saints—‘such an one was sent over to Ireland for education;’ and in the Life of Fulgenus—

‘Exemplo patrum commotus, amore legendi,  
Ivit ad Hibernos, sophiâ mirabile claros.’\*\*

By his ancestors’ bright example moved,  
He sought abroad the learning which he loved,  
And in Hibernia skilful masters found,  
Whose wisdom is thro’ all the world renowned.

Sir James Ware, in his *Treatise on Irish Writers*, remarks (Address to the Reader, 1636), that “Ireland for ages after the coming of St. Patrick *abounded with most learned persons* \* \* \* and was justly called the Island of Saints.”

The following most important testimony is from Mosheim, the Protestant ecclesiastical historian:—“That the Irish were lovers of learning, and distinguished themselves, in those times of ignorance, **BEYOND ALL OTHER EUROPEAN NATIONS**, travelling through the most distant lands with a view to improve and communicate their knowledge, is a fact with which I have been long acquainted; as we see them in the most authentic records of antiquity, discharging with the highest reputation and applause the functions of doctors in France, Germany, and Italy.”†

Moreri, in his Dictionary, under the word *Ireland*, sums up the labours of her sons thus:—“Ireland has given the most distinguished professors to the most famous universities of Europe, as Claudius Clements to Paris, Albuinus to Pavia in Italy, Johannes Scotus Erigena to Oxford in England. The English Saxons received from the Irish *their characters or letters, and with them the arts and sciences that have flourished since among these people*, as Sir James Ware proves in his *Treatise on the Irish Writers*, book 1, chap. 13, where may be seen an account of the celebrated academies and public schools which were maintained in Ireland in the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth ages, which were resorted to, particularly by the Anglo-Saxons, the French, and Ancient Britons, who were all received there with greater hospitality than in any other country of the Christian world.”

No wonder the great prince of English literature, Dr. Johnson, called Ireland in those ages “**THE SCHOOL OF THE WEST**, the quiet habitation of sanctity and literature.” But, alas! this light of the nations was doomed to suffer a disastrous eclipse. Moreri adds—The Irish “were inundated by the irruption of a frightful number of

\* Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis, B. 1, p. 112.

† Eccl. Hist. Cent. 8, chap. 3, Note.

Danes, and other people in the North, who, like the Normans in France, and about the same time, destroyed their *cities*, ruined their *colleges* and monasteries, put to death an infinite number of monks and priests, and reduced that country (which was then, as the historians of that time declare, *the most civilized of Europe*, the nursery of all sciences and virtues) to the last state of barbarism.”\*

But the elastic energy which has ever distinguished this interesting people, soon repaired the desolation, as far as it was possible, when so many learned works were destroyed and so many living lights extinguished. Sir James Ware testifies that, “although the Norwegian plunderers, who, in the ninth age, under Turgesius, occupied this island for thirty years, destroyed almost all the churches and books by fire, nevertheless, the study of literature revived; and even in the *eleventh age Ireland was esteemed the repertory of the most holy and learned men.*”

I shall quote another passage from Lord Lyttleton. Speaking of the Danish devastations, he says: “The fierce spirit of their religion increasing the natural barbarity of their minds, they turned their rage more particularly against the clergy, whom they massacred without mercy; and in their hatred to them, burned their books, their schools and their convents. Among the many learned men who were driven by the terror of this persecution to take refuge abroad, none distinguished themselves more than Albin and Clement, whom the Emperor Charles the First received in his court, and honoured with his favour. Of the last of these it is said by a contemporary German writer, that, through *his* instructions the French might vie with the *Romans* and *Athenians*. John Erigena, whose surname denoted his country (Ere or Erin, being the proper name of Ireland,) became, soon afterwards, famous for his learning and good parts both in England and France. Thus did most of the lights which, in those times of thick darkness, cast their beams over Europe, proceed out of Ireland. The loss of the Manuscripts, which the ravages of the Pagans destroyed, is much bewailed by the Irish, who treat of the history and antiquities of their country, and which may well be deemed a misfortune not only to them, but the whole learned world.”†

I might fill many pages with testimonies of this kind, placing the eminence of ancient Ireland in such a light, that only contemptible ignorance or detestable bigotry can presume to deny it. But I shall content myself with one more from a master in the “new school of history,” remarkable for his piercing investigation of original autho-

\* Le Grand Dictionnaire Historique Paris, 1759,—*Irlande*.

† Lord Lyttleton's Henry II.

rities, his skill in developing the inner life of society, and his boldness in announcing the results of his inquiries, no matter how widely they may be at variance with the commonly received opinions of other historians.

“The major part of the Irish were men with dark hair, with strong passions, loving and hating with vehemence, irascible, yet of a social temper. In many things, especially in religion, they were enthusiasts, and willingly intermingled the Christian worship with their poetry and literature, which was perhaps *the most cultivated* in all western Europe. Their island possessed *a multitude of saints and learned men*, venerated alike in England and in Gaul; *for no country had furnished a greater number of Christian missionaries*, animated by no other motive than pure zeal, and an ardent desire of communicating to foreign nations the opinions and the faith of their native country. The Irish were great travellers, and always gained the hearts of those whom they visited, by the extreme ease with which they conformed to their customs and way of life.”\*

Such was the nature of Irish immigration, and emigration then, when, in her own unrivalled colleges at home, she gave a *free education* to the youth of Saxon England, and the West of Europe; and when her missionary sons were the founders and the glory of foreign monasteries and universities.

Now, also, as in ancient times, “the Irish are great travellers;” but under what different circumstances! How changed is our relation to the civilized world, by six centuries of English rule! How refined and fiendish the persecution that doomed to *compulsory ignorance* a people so enthusiastic in the pursuit of knowledge, and so generous in its diffusion! This was worse than all the massacres and confiscations by which this fair country was laid waste; for it aimed too fatally to “KILL THE SOUL.” Our people travel now, not as lights of the world, but as menial drudges, to make the roads and reap the harvests of a people to whose rude forefathers, the Irish once communicated the use of letters, and to whose greatest men they were “guides, philosophers, and friends,” educating and boarding multitudes of them without fee or reward. In return for all this, their country was invaded, their patrimonies plundered, their nobles reduced to beggary, their ancestral homes, their churches and colleges desolated, and their whole nation ultimately reduced to slavery! To justify this, their very history has been falsified, where it could not be obliterated, and everything that the bribed and bigoted literature of an ascendant

\* Thierry, Norman Conquest, B. 10, p. 193. See also Michelet's History of France, B. 1, cap. 4.



nation could accomplish, has been done to calumniate and degrade the people, while a cunning and heartless government worked hard at its every day oppression, to verify the villanous misrepresentation.

“ With the vulgar herd of mankind, whether toiling in the drudgeries of life, or revelling in its luxuries—whether sitting in the seat of power or musing in the philosophic chair—*calamity* is a sure passport to contempt. But we visit those with the full weight of our hatred and scorn, whom we have most *injured and wronged*. Hence, upon the Continent, Ireland was merely despised—in England detested. But this, likewise, has passed, or is passing; and we may now again advert to the ancient history of Ireland, and be heard, perhaps, with patience. \* \* \* \* \*

“ In every age Ireland had borne the banner of civil and religious freedom. She sent her auxiliaries to combat by the side of Britain, in the days of the Cæsars, for the independence of the sister island; and she succeeded, in conjunction with the Northern tribes, in staying the tide of Roman dominion. The imperial eagles folded their wings, and maintained, with difficulty, a defensive contest behind their triple wall. She, too, carried the sacred standard of religious liberty on the Continent, and in England; and wherever the battle raged fiercest, upon which depended the deepest interests of mankind, the right to be free in thought, and to worship God with an unconstrained volition.

“ It was in reference to this period that Ireland, by the unanimous consent of the European nations, was placed in the rank of a *third Empire*; the Roman, the Constantinopolitan, and the Irish. Is this any evidence of her worth and her renown? It was not surely her extent, or her conquests in the world, that gave her this high place.—Hers was not an empire purchased by the tears and sufferings of other nations; but by benefits conferred upon them. Her triumphs were peaceful triumphs; and such as in comparison with which Cressy, Agincourt, and Waterloo, fade into nothing. It is a vulgar thing to subdue a nation. Have not the Goths, and the Huns, and the Turks, and the Tartars, done this? But, to give refuge to many people, to instruct many nations; these are triumphs worthy of Empire. The claim of Ireland to a third empire was established at the Council of Constance;\* and it was more glorious than the other two, for it was the empire of intellect and benevolence.”†

\* A. D. 1417, when the legates of Henry V. got precedence over those of France, solely on the ground of Ireland's ancient pre-eminence as a kingdom.

† O'Driscoll, *Views of Ireland*, vol. 2, p. 104.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE ANGLO-NORMAN CONQUEST.

“When Robert Fitzstephen and the brave knights of Britain invaded Ireland, they did not find cowards, but valiant men, brave both as horse and foot.”

HANNER.

CAMDEN informs us, that “The whole nation of the Irish were strong in their persons, peculiarly active, possessing a brave and elevated mind, sharp in their intellects and warlike.” “They were, besides,” says Stanihurst, “extremely hospitable, good natured, and beneficent—of all men the most patient in suffering, and rarely overcome with difficulties.” Champion, and other Englishmen admit that they were “religious, sincere, compassionate, full of energy in misfortune; good horsemen, passionately fond of war, charitable and hospitable beyond expression.”

Such were the people whom the Anglo-Normans undertook to conquer in the twelfth century; and, as many have regarded even their partial success as a proof that the Irish must have been a cowardly and contemptible race, born to serve, it will be desirable to glance at the career of these Normans in other countries. The love of a predatory life seems to have attracted adventurers of different nations to the Scandinavian seas, from whence they invested, not only by maritime piracy, but continual invasions, the Northern coasts both of France and Germany.

“The causes of their sudden appearance are inexplicable, or at least could only be sought in the ancient traditions of Scandinavia. In 787, the Danes, as these Northern plunderers were then called, began to infest England, which lay most immediately open to their incursions. They adopted a uniform plan of warfare, sailing up navigable rivers, in their vessels of small burden, and fortifying the islands which they occasionally found; they made these intrenchments at once an asylum for their women and children, a repository for their plunder, and a place of retreat from superior force. After pillaging a town they retired to these strongholds, or to their ships. Towards the close of the ninth century they laid siege to Paris, and committed

the most ruinous devastations in the neighbouring country. As these Normans were unchecked by religious awe, the rich monasteries, which had stood harmless amidst the havoc of Christian war, were overwhelmed in the storm. St. Denis redeemed its abbot from captivity with 685 pounds of gold. So impoverished was the kingdom, that in 860, Charles the Bald had great difficulty in collecting 3000 pounds of silver to *subsidise a body of Normans against* their countrymen. The kings of France, too feeble to prevent or repel these invaders, had recourse to the palliative of buying peace at their hands, or rather precarious amnesties, to which reviving thirst of plunder soon put an end. At length Charles the Simple, in 918, ceded a great province which they had already partly occupied, partly rendered desolate, and which has derived from them the name of *Normandy*. Ignominious as this appears, it proved no impolitic step.—Rollo, the Norman chief, with (and) all his subjects, became Christians and Frenchmen; and the kingdom was at once relieved from a terrible enemy, and strengthened by a race of hardy colonists.\*

Ireland acted a nobler part than this: she fought the Danes, and vanquished them gloriously on the plains of Clontarf.

We shall now follow the course of these robbers in England, taking for our guide the learned Thierry. For more than a century and a half nearly the whole of Britain had borne the appellation of England, and the name of Briton or Gael, had, in the estimation of the German rulers of the island, the meaning only of serf or tributary, when some strangers, arriving in three vessels, landed at one of the ports on the eastern coast. They seized the Saxon magistrate, who approached them in a friendly manner, slew him, and plundered the neighbouring habitations. This was the first visit to England of the Danes or Northmen. They were descended from the same Teutonic race as the Saxons, and spoke a kindred language. They were Pagans. They shed the blood of priests with pleasure, were particularly gratified in pillaging churches, and littered their horses in the chapels belonging to palaces, deeming all this most acceptable to their god Odin. Their “sea-king” was faithfully obeyed, for he was always renowned as the bravest of the brave, as he “who had never slept beneath a rafted roof, nor ever drained the bowl by a sheltered hearth. He could govern a vessel as a good horseman manages a horse; when on a voyage, he could run across the oars while they were in motion; he could throw three javelins to the mast-head, and catch them alternately in his hand, and would repeat this trial of skill without once missing.” About 870, an

\* Hallam's Europe during the Middle Ages, 5th ed. vol 1, pp. 17, 19.



expedition under eight of these sea-kings invaded the north of England, took possession of York, the capital of Northumbria, slaughtered the monks of Croyland at the altar, and proceeded to Peterborough, where they plundered and murdered in like manner, setting fire to the monastery, which continued burning for fifteen days. They went on, invading and conquering, till the Saxon King Alfred was obliged to seek refuge in concealment in woods and deserts. Many of the Saxon people fled to Gaul and Ireland, and the rest submitted to pay tribute and to labour for the Danes. They were subsequently resisted, and some of them massacred. But returning with larger reinforcements, they conquered the great Saxon nation, and three Danish kings reigned on the throne of England, having embraced the Christian religion. But their professed change of faith made little or no change in their spirit. They still played the part of Norman conquerors. Behold the condition to which they reduced Saxon society:—"The Dane who bore title of King of England was not the only one that oppressed the natives. \* \* \* The Saxon's dwelling was the Dane's household, in which the foreigner had food, fire, and bed gratuitously; he occupied the place of honour as master. The head of the family could not drink without the permission of his guest, nor remain seated in his presence. The guest insulted his wife, his daughter, or his servant at pleasure; and if any man of courage undertook to defend or avenge them, that brave man had no longer an asylum. He was tracked and pursued like a wild beast; a price was set on his head as on that of wolves; he became, according to the Anglo-Saxon expression, a *wolf-head*; and nothing was left for him but to fly to the abode of wolves, and turn robber in the forests against the foreign conquerors, and the natives who *shamefully slumbered under a foreign yoke*."\*

The Danish dynasty was indeed terminated; and the Saxons did not retaliate. But Edward, their new king, was brought up among the Normans, spoke their language, and adopted their customs. They crowded his court, filled the great offices of church and state, and gave the tone to fashion. The Saxon lords began to stammer in broken French, substituted the short cloaks of the Normans for their own long mantles, and even in writing imitated the lengthened form of the

\* "Norman Conquest, B. 2, p. 46. No people were so much addicted to robbery, to riotous frays, and feuds arising out of family revenge, as the Anglo-Saxons."—Hallam, vol. 2, p. 79. And M'Intosh, speaking of the "horrid cruelties" practised by both Danes and Saxons in their civil wars, says: "Let those who consider any tribes of men as irreclaimable, call to mind of what people these were the progenitors." History of England, vol. 1, p. 60.

Norman letters. These strangers were, however, banished in obedience to the popular indignation; but the Saxon power was not destined to continue long. William the Conqueror landed in England at the head of an army composed of "all the adventurers by profession—all the outcasts of Western Europe. Some were cavaliers or warlike chiefs, others were simply foot soldiers and sergeants-at-arms, as they were then called. Some asked for pay in money; others only for their passage and all the booty they could make: many wished for land among the English, a demesne, a castle, or a town; while others would be content with a rich Saxon woman in marriage."

The decisive battle of Hastings was fought. The Normans marched in triumph through the land; and the gates of the metropolis were thrown open to them without striking a blow. William was crowned king of England. The whole country was confiscated and divided among his followers. The Saxon nobles were degraded and disinherited; the bishops' sees were all soon seized by Norman adventurers, and the great Saxon nation was reduced to a state of serfdom under foreign masters. In the incredibly short space of four years the conquest of the kingdom was completed, the land divided among strangers, and the Norman sovereignty settled on a permanent foundation!—This was the work of four years; but the conquest of Ireland was scarcely accomplished in four hundred years!—Why was this subjugation of the English nation so easy? Because the brave Saxon people had not leaders worthy of them. Their miserable divisions and jealousies, and their sordid ambition, made them traitors to their country in the hour of trial; and so the national independence was lost. Is it fair for modern English writers, with these facts before them, to sneer at the Irish as pusillanimous, because, owing to a complication of unfavourable circumstances, they suffered these same Normans to gain a lodgment in their soil? The reader, I trust, will see, that this brief account of the invasions, robberies, and conquests of this Northern race in France and England, is no useless digression, since it shows that these powerful nations suffered the infliction of this scourge with greater tameness and subserviency than ever the Irish were guilty of.

The Norman vilification of their Irish victims was no new thing with them. The dispossessed and outlawed Saxons began to make reprisals, and committed many robberies and murders, having recourse to the "wild justice of revenge," and doing, in isolated cases, what their new masters had done on a large scale. This was ascribed to the "*natural villany*" of the people! The said people were spoken of with sovereign contempt as "the *Englishry*," and each foreign



master regarded himself as "a demigod among brutes!" In reading the history of the Normans we are struck with the singular fact, that, almost uniformly, the antipathy of *race* predominates over *religion*, and utterly extinguishes brotherly love and Christian charity. This melancholy fact must never be forgotten in contemplating the progress of their power in Ireland.

"The hatred which the clergy of the conquest bore to the natives of England, extended even to the *saints* of English birth, and in different places their tombs were broken open and their bones scattered! All that had been anciently venerated in England was looked upon by the new-comers as vile and contemptible. But the violent aversion of the Normans for the English saints, had a *political* reason, distinct from their common disdain for every thing that appertained to the vanquished, \* \* \* as the people's veneration for them fostered the spirit of revolt, and consecrated all the old recollections of bravery and liberty. The foreign priests, therefore, with Lanfranc at their head, lost no time in proclaiming that the Saxon saints were not true saints, nor the Saxon martyrs true martyrs."\*

One hundred years after the conquest of England a party of the bold and adventurous Norman race, who had been engaged in the subjugation of Wales, accepted the invitation of Dermot M'Murrough, king of Leinster, and came over to try their fortune in Ireland. They consisted of Robert Fitzstephen, Maurice Fitzgerald, Harvé de Monte Marisco, and David Barry, with 400 knights, esquires, and archers. Two years afterwards they were followed by Earl Strongbow with large reinforcements. These Normans were soldiers by profession. They were clothed in complete armour; their horses also were covered and barbed with steel, perfectly trained—a heavy and invulnerable cavalry, whose shock overturned the small, defenceless, and undisciplined horses of the Irish. The latter laboured likewise under an immense disadvantage from the nature of their arms, which consisted of small steel axes, long slender javelins, and short and very sharp arrows. These availed little in a close engagement against broad swords and heavy lances, wielded by men dexterous from long practice and confident in the security of their armour, whose very novelty and formidable appearance struck terror into the people, and on some occasions produced a *panic*, and thereby gave an easy victory. The Danes of Wexford were thus terrified when they first beheld the invaders approaching them across the plains of Barguy, on whose coast they had landed. After resisting two assaults within their walls, they took the advice

\* Norman Conquest, B. 5.



of their bishop, were reconciled to their king, Dermot, and opened their gates to the Normans. Dermot, of course, had a numerous force of his native partizans to assist his foreign allies, and therefore he found it easy to bring back his subjects to their allegiance. A *prestige* of terror accompanied the name of the strangers—rumour magnified their power;—and, as a consequence, the southern kings were not able to bring sufficient force into the field; and therefore were obliged to do homage to Henry, which, in that age, was a mere matter of form in the case of sovereign princes. But notwithstanding all the advantages of the English in the points adverted to, increased as they were by the erection of strong castles, they must have been defeated and extirpated by overwhelming numbers and valour, but for causes to which we will now advert, and which must be noticed in order to vindicate the character of our brave people, and to show them that if their forefathers had got fair play their beloved country would be an independent and glorious nation still!

I. The first of these causes is internal division—the hereditary curse of Ireland. Five kings, all virtually sovereign and equal, reigned over the country. Their rival claims and mutual animosities kept the people in perpetual strife, which was inflamed by an unfortunate law of succession, called *Tanistry*, which allowed of election to the throne within the royal family, giving rise to intrigue, jealousy, mortification and revenge. And, what made matters worse, the heir presumptive to the throne was chosen immediately after the coronation of his predecessor, which sometimes led to the murder of the king. One of the kings, it is true, was lord paramount, or supreme monarch of the whole island, but this was a mere nominal rank, for he had little or no corresponding authority. There was, therefore, no central power strong enough to bring the national forces to bear against a common enemy—no rallying cry that could gather the various principalities, tribes, and clans under one national banner. Isolated and mutually hostile, each became an easy prey to the invader, who had, indeed, been basely brought into the country by one of its own unworthy kings.

But let it not be supposed, as has been represented, that this national dissension is peculiar to Ireland—a vice inherent in the people. We have seen that similar disunion among the Saxon chiefs proved equally fatal in England. At a critical moment during the invasion, a powerful prince, influenced by some personal pique, marched off his forces when the conqueror was approaching the gates of London, which surrendered to him without striking a blow. To compare Ireland in the twelfth century with England in the nineteenth is absurd.

Read the history of Europe in the middle ages, and you will find oppression, division, revolt, truce-breaking, and insecurity of royal life as prevalent in every nation as in Ireland. Not to speak of the tumults of ancient Greece and Rome, the factions of Italy, the assassinations of Spain, or the dreadful civil wars between rival houses under the monarchy of England, it is enough to mention that “during the heptarchy in England twenty-eight Saxon kings were murdered, the most of them one by the other. In the kingdom of Northumberland alone four kings were assassinated and three deposed within the space of forty-one years; so that this people remained without a king thirty years, no one daring to assume the title or the reins of government.”\*

Italy was the most civilized portion of the continent in the middle ages, and yet Mr. Hallam describes the state of society in the following manner: “The private history of many families, such for instance as the Scala and Gonzaga, *is but a series of assassinations*. The ordinary vices of mankind assumed a tint of portentous guilt in the palaces of Italian princes. Their revenge was fratricide, and their lust was incest.”†

How tolerant are English rulers and writers of continental iniquities, while the least speck on the Irish character is magnified into a monstrous eye-sore! If Ireland has been longer afflicted than other countries with “internecine bigotry,” the causes of this disastrous distinction will be found to attach not so much to her as to her accusers.

II. Another reason for the facility with which the Anglo-Normans effected a settlement in this country, among a people so devoted to liberty, is that they had not only been exhausted with their own civil wars, but had maintained with the Danes a struggle, rarely remitted, for nearly three hundred years. Our unfortunate peasantry were then as well accustomed to invasion and robbery as they are now to semi-starvation. It was not a strange, unheard-of visitation, startling a whole nation into oblivion of everything but self-defence, as would be the landing of an invading army on our shores now. We are perpetually in danger of fallacy from not adverting to the terribly disordered, lawless and unsettled character of the times of which we are treating. Society throughout Europe was then dissolved into its elements; things human and divine were mixed up in wild confusion,

\* M'Geoghan's History of Ireland, ch. 6.

† Middle Ages, vol. 1, p. 300.

the chaotic masses fermenting and exploding, and rushing now in one direction and now in another as they found vent.

The hardy Northmen, demoralized by a life of robbery, made reckless by sea-faring adventures, proud and pampered from the spoils so rapidly acquired, inflamed by the fanaticism of a cruel idolatry, and multiplying fast in their cold climate, poured into Ireland in such quick succession, and marked their progress with so "wide a latitude of ruin," that the approach of the English was regarded at first but as a mild form of a periodic calamity. Large numbers of Danes had colonised the Eastern coast, and having founded trading establishments, were the chief people in the maritime towns. Dublin, Wexford, and Waterford, were, in fact, Danish cities. They could not be expected to make common cause with their old enemies, the natives; nor could the mutual confidence necessary to unity of action subsist between them. Between men of different race, bearing the relation of conquerors and conquered, bad faith and treachery are almost matters of course. The Dano-Irish had no country to fight for, no venerable ancestry to appeal to them from their violated graves, no inspiring nationality to defend. Self-interest alone led them to protect their homes and their property, but this very principle would induce them to enter as soon as possible into a compromise with invaders of their own race. Couple this influence with that of *Mac Murrough*, over his Leinster subjects, and you have a combination of circumstances most favourable to the Normans, landing as they did, in *that* part of the country. It would have been very different, had they made their descent on the Western or Northern coast, with no traitor king to harbour them, and no resident strangers to be friendly or neutral.

III. There is another more important point of view still, in which this foreign colony exerted a most fatal influence on the destinies of Ireland. The Danes were converted to Christianity; but retaining their national antipathy, they aspired to have bishops of their own race placed over them in the towns where they dwelt. These kept up a correspondence with the Norman prelates of England; and as there were then differences in discipline between the Anglican and the Irish churches, they were induced to decline the jurisdiction of the Primate of Ireland, and to place themselves under the See of Canterbury. This will partly account for the fact that the bishop at Wexford, and other Danish prelates, pleaded for peace with the foreigners. Subsequently, Archbishop O'Toole, like Thomas á Becket, vindicated his native blood by contending nobly for the liberties of his countrymen.

IV. A fourth reason, more powerful than any, must be assigned for



the subjugation of the Irish nation. The Pope then claimed and possessed temporal jurisdiction, or rather sovereignty, over the nations; and to the great detriment of the Catholic religion, as all its wisest advocates are now ready to admit, several of the greatest monarchs of Europe held their kingdoms as fiefs of the Apostolic See. Among these was Henry the Second, a man of stern tyranny and unbounded licentiousness. By his intrigues at the court of Rome, and the false representations of his creatures in Ireland, he managed to persuade his Holiness, that it would be for the interest of religion that he (Henry) should become lord of Ireland, paying tribute to the chair of Peter, as a feudatory, for he had long set his heart on the conquest of this kingdom. He the more readily succeeded in this nefarious purpose, as Adrian IV., the reigning Pope, was an Englishman. Besides this, one or two Danish bishops, those of Limerick and Lismore, had become legates of the Apostolic See in Ireland. Malachi, Archbishop of Armagh, whose investiture had been resisted at home, went to Rome to solicit the *Pallium*. This was declined at first, but in 1152, Cardinal Paparo came over, and formally bestowed that mark of Papal jurisdiction on the four Archbishops at the Synod of Kells, *three* of them, Dublin, Cashel, and Tuam, having been then raised to the dignity of metropolitans.

Thus were most of the higher clergy *secured to the English interest*. On them, foreign connexion soon produced its usual effects. A corrupt ambition was fostered by the intrigues of the Norman court. The aspirations of these prelates were attracted from their own country and its liberties, to the quarter whence the most worthless might look for preferment. Hence, twenty years after the reception of the *Palls*, namely, in 1172, “Christian, bishop of Lismore, and legate of the holy See; Donat, Archbishop of Cashel; Laurence, Archbishop of Dublin; and Catholicus, Archbishop of Tuam; with their suffragans, and a great number of abbots, archdeacons, priors, deans, and other prelates of the church of Ireland, held a council in the city of Cashel, *by order of King Henry*; in which, after a strict investigation into the *degeneracy of morals in that country*, an address was prepared, sealed with the seal of the legate, to be sent to the court of Rome, *in compliance with which*, Alexander, who was then pope, granted the sovereignty of Ireland to Henry, on condition that *he* would propagate there, the faith and ecclesiastical discipline, *according to the rules of the English church.*”\*

\* Giraldus Cambrensis, Hiber. Expug. Lib. 1, c. 34. See Mac Geoghegan's Irish History, Duffy's edition, p. 241.

Henry had many years previously obtained a bull from Adrian ; but he had been so busy quelling insurrections among his subjects in France, that he could not attend to Ireland, till the visit of Dermot brought the question urgently before him. Having made peace with the Pope as well as with his own subjects, he obtained another slanderous bull from Alexander, founded on the misrepresentations of the Synod of Cashel, which was, in fact, *a commission of inquiry* (somewhat like Lord Roden's a few years ago), appointed by Henry himself, expressly *to make out a case against Ireland*, that *he*, forsooth, might have the glory of reforming that naughty people ! “ The transaction presents, in all respects,” says Moore, in his History of Ireland, “ a perfect instance of that sort of hypocritical prelude to wrong—that holy league for purposes of rapine, between the Papal and the Regal powers, in which most of the usurpations, frauds, and violences of these dark and demoralised times, originated.”

The venerable Abbé Mac Geoghegan cannot but regard these bulls as forgeries, and he thus honourably pours forth his patriotic feelings on the occasion :—

“ The above (the bull of Adrian) was an edict pronounced against Ireland, by which the rights of men and the most sacred laws are violated, under the specious pretext of religion and the reformation of morals. The Irish were no longer to possess a country. That people, who had never bent under a foreign yoke, were condemned to lose their liberty without even being heard. But can the Vicar of Jesus Christ be accused of so glaring an act of injustice ? Can he be thought capable of having issued a bull which overthrew an entire nation—which dispossessed so many ancient proprietors of their patrimonies—caused so much blood to be shed, and, at length, tended to the destruction of religion in the island ? It is a thing not to be conceived !”\*

In addition to all this preparation, Henry's church friends had written highly flattering letters to the native princes to prepare them for the yoke. Now, with the weight of such influence on the side of the invaders, is it not wonderful that they were resisted at all ? In an age so ignorant, it might have seemed the will of Heaven that they should receive the Pope's nominee as their lord. Besides, he came professedly as a peace-maker, offering the nation a *Protectorate*, under whose benign influence, dissensions would be healed, lawless chiefs curbed, morals reformed, and property rendered inviolate !

Being thus acknowledged by the ecclesiastical authorities, and some

\* History of Ireland, p. 238.

of the Irish princes, as their lord, this pious king commenced the work of reformation! Under his blessed auspices, it was ordained that marriages should be celebrated within the prohibited degrees of affinity—that children should be catechised at the church doors and christened in a font—and, above all, that tithes should be paid. Surely the former of these improvements, if such they were, might have been effected by the church herself without the *secular* authority of a foreign king!—and as to the *tithes*—an impost till then repudiated in this country—they will now be regarded by all parties as a very doubtful blessing! The new law regarding them, was explained a few years after by a Dublin Synod, as including the tenth of all provisions, of hay, flax, wool, the young of animals, and the produce of gardens and orchards. Besides other advantages, the domains of the church were freed from all taxes and public burdens.

Such were the powerful inducements held out by the Anglo-Normans to the guides of public opinion in Ireland. But these gained in power still more than in property. O'Connor and Lanigan have shown, that under the ancient system the clergy owed their chieftain the customary duties of clansmen, and were amenable to the ordinary Brehon jurisdiction. It was not till the beginning of the eighth century, they were exempted from military service. It was, no doubt, humiliating for them to contrast this subordinate *status* with the baronial power and splendour that encircled the Episcopal office in England and on the Continent. This feeling would naturally leave them open to the intrigues of their country's enemies. They had, however, a more legitimate cause of complaint in the insecurity of church property and the depredations that were committed on it in time of war.\*

How sudden and how vast the change that took place in their social position under the English government! The writ of Henry II. appointing Fitzadelm to the lieutenancy of Ireland, is addressed to his "archbishops, bishops, kings, earls, barons, &c." Henry III. in commencing a writ places the name of the Archbishop of Dublin before that of the Lord Deputy. Wherever the laws or the arms of England prevailed, this new order of things was respected, but beyond the Pale, the clergy and the people clung to their old usages, maintaining a virtuous independence. This melancholy chapter in Irish history is full of *instruction and warning for our own times!* The English government were never more eager to *retain* the advo-

\* O'Connor, Sen. Disc. 216. Lanigan, vol. 4, p. 209.



cacy of the Catholic clergy, at any price, than they are at this moment. Their design is obvious—to stifle the spirit of nationality, and restore “the stillness and moral degradation of servitude.” This painful record of facts was necessary, not only to guard against present danger, arising from Castle diplomacy, but to demonstrate that our ancestors in the twelfth century were *deceived* by the Anglo-Normans—NOT CONQUERED.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE ENGLISH PALE.

“ Her sceptre, alas ! passed away to the stranger,  
 And treason surrendered what valour had held,  
 But true hearts remained amid darkness and danger,  
 Which spite of her tyrants would *not* be quelled.”

M. J. BARRY.

It was no strange thing with the Normans in England to bequeath to their children, or give as a marriage portion, towns and districts belonging to the Saxons or the Welsh, *to be conquered*, that is, seized on by force at some future time, without the least regard to the rights of the possessors. In the same spirit Henry II. disposed of Ireland. “ *All Ireland*,” says Sir John Davies, Attorney-General to James I., “ was by Henry II. cantonised among ten of the English nation : (viz. the Earl of Strongbow, Robert Fitzstephens, Miles de Cogan, Philip Bruce, Sir Hugh de Lacy, Sir John Courcy, William Burke Fitz-Andelm, Sir Thomas de Clare, Otho de Grandison, and Robert Le Poer,) and though they had not gained possession of *one third* part of the kingdom, yet *in title* they were owners and lords of all, *so as nothing was left to be granted* to the natives. And, therefore, we do not find in any record or history for the space of 300 years after these adventurers first arrived in Ireland, that any Irish lord obtained a grant of his country from the crown.”\* He excepts the King of Thomond, and Roderick O’Connor, King of Connaught, the latter of whom retained his kingdom on condition that he kept it “ in the *good and peaceable* state in which he kept it before the invasion of Ireland.”

Here was a good beginning in the work of reform ! With such an example before them, how could the “ wild Irish ” avoid being smitten with the love of English justice ?

When Henry died, about a third of the island acknowledged his sway. It was called the *Pale*, and lay along the eastern coast. The

\* Historical Relations.

Pale was extended from time to time by private adventurers, who were rewarded and honoured for the success of these plundering excursions. The natives were all regarded as enemies, and savage outlaws. As "mere Irish" they might be killed with impunity. If in any case they resisted aggression, and sought to protect their firesides and their properties, they were branded as *rebels*.

The Irish might easily have been brought under the dominion of English law, if their rulers wished ; but the new military aristocracy and their Norman prelates would not consent to this. The wider they could blow the flame of rebellion over the land, the broader would be their domains. "It was certainly a great defect," says Sir John Davies, "in the civil policy of Ireland, that for the space of 350 *years at least* after the conquest, the English laws were not communicated to its people, nor the benefit and protection thereof allowed them, though they earnestly desired and sought the same ; for as long as they were out of the protection of the laws, so as every Englishman might oppress, spoil, and kill them without control, how was it possible they could be other than outlaws and enemies to the crown of England."—*Historical Tracts*, p. 90.

King John granted to his Irish subjects a charter of the laws and usages of England, to the observance of which he bound the nobles by an oath. His son and successor, Henry III., confirmed this charter the first year of his reign ; eleven years after he *enforced* it in a mandate directed to his "*archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, earls, barons, knights, &c.*" After a second interval of eighteen years the monarch again addressed the same personages, but in the humble tone of supplication, "that for the sake of peace and quietness they would *permit* the English laws and customs to be observed in his land of Ireland !" "But," says Dean Murray, in his well-written, *Outlines of Irish Church History*, "neither commands nor entreaties were found availing : the lay lords of both races preferred serfs to yeomanry, and resolved to continue the horrors of the aboriginal system.

"In the reign of Edward I. a few broken clans and many smaller groups of the miserable natives, the refuse of the sword and its attendant horrors, were still lingering within the precincts of the English colonies ; they were pent in those corners of the old possessions, which had not yet attracted the cupidity of the settlers, contemptuously tolerated in their ancient usages, but excluded from all the benefits of English law and government. \* \* \* They were not acknowledged as the king's subjects, the king's courts were not open to them ; and if the blood of a father or a brother were shed, his assassin had only to plead that the deceased was an Irishman, and he was



secure from all vengeance but that of the Almighty. In the truce that had naturally arisen out of their weakness, and the sated thirst for conquest in their invaders, they received every day some new and mortifying proof of their own destitution, and of the manifold advantages enjoyed by Englishmen. \* \* \* They made up a purse of *eight thousand marks*, which they tendered to the king through his Irish governor, with a request that he would *receive them as his faithful liege men and take them under the protection of the laws of England*. Nothing can so well illustrate their broken-hearted wretchedness as this mode of preferring the petition! a measure so just in itself, so fair in its prospects, so full of glory to the prince who might condescend to adopt it, was not even to be thought of by the suppliants, unless, *like too many of their unhappy posterity, they should approach the seat of justice with a bribe.*"\*

It is with no small pleasure I quote such passages from a dignitary of the Irish establishment; it shows that all who inherit the Norman power in Ireland, do not breathe their anti-national *animus*, and that on all sides party spirit is yielding to the force of truth and justice. On this point there is little or no difference between the Dean of Ardagh and the author of the "Memoirs of Captain Rock." "But," says Mr. Moore, "the proud barons to whom he had entrusted the government of Ireland, or in other words the Orange ascendancy of the day, could not so easily surrender their privilege of oppression, but, preferring victims to subjects, resolved to keep the Irish as they were." And Mr. Moore himself must admit, that never was English oppression more dreadful to the Irish than when its instruments were their fellow-Catholics.

Five royal families, however, were admitted to the privileges of the Pale, the O'Neills, O'Connors, O'Briens, O'Lochlans, and Mac Murroughs. No Irish but these five "bloods" could sue or be sued in an English court of law. All not included in these tribes, were "*mere Irish*," and might be shot like dogs, whenever they crossed an Englishman's path. The most atrocious crimes committed against them were innocent: robbery was meritorious; murder, pastime; treachery, honourable; and the violation of female virtue, laudable. The natives were treated not as responsible beings having rights conferred on them by the Creator, but as wild beasts, "*made to be taken and destroyed*!" How can we wonder if they, in their turn, were ferocious, vindictive, and false to their oppressors;—if they retaliated with inhuman vengeance, and cherished an instinctive hereditary hatred to the whole

\* History of the Catholic Church in Ireland, p. 93.

English nation, whose power sustained such barbarous tyranny? Have we not in this state of things the *fons malorum*—the fountain-head of those perennial streams of poisoned waters which have flowed over the Irish soil ever since, and converted what might have been a garden of the Lord, into a moral desert?

During the early part of the fourteenth century a kind of intercourse had gradually sprung up between the English and the Irish, for it is hard to force out nature by human laws. Intermarriages sometimes took place; some powerful Norman families adopted the Irish language, dress, and customs. These were called “degenerated English,” and were esteemed “more Irish than the Irish themselves.” Such a process of amalgamation was deemed fatal to the “English interest.” A proclamation was therefore issued in the reign of Edward III. confining all public offices to those of English birth. This excited too much indignation within the Pale to be acted on; but the distinction thus drawn had its effect, and nearly all the prominent places of power were actually in the possession of Englishmen thenceforward.

In the fortieth year of this king, the lords of the Pale held a parliament in Kilkenny, in which they ordained that intermarriages with the natives, or any connexion with them in the way of fostering or gossipred, should be *punished as high treason!*—that any Englishman using the Irish language, dress or customs, should *forfeit all his lands and tenements*—that to adopt or submit to the ancient law of Ireland was *treason*—that the presentation of *mere Irishmen to any ecclesiastical benefice*, or the *admission of them into religious houses* was *penal*; as well as to entertain any bard, minstrel, or storyteller!!

In an old state paper, quoted by Mr. O’Connell, the writer quaintly says:—“That if this lande were put once in order as aforesayd, it would be none other but a very paradise, delicious of all plesaunce, to respect and regard of any other lande in this worlde: inasmuch as there never was a stranger, nor alien person, great or small, that would avoyde therefro by his will.” There certainly must have been a peculiar fascination in Irish society—a singular power of winning conformity to its own customs, when even the proud Norman barons required to be held to their English habits by the revolting enactments just referred to. Yet such is the fact. These monstrous laws were necessary to prevent the amalgamation of races which every good man would have prayed for:—“This interfusion would have been rapid; and have presented a phenomenon which has not elsewhere been met with; for, owing to the mildness of character, and the social affability of the natives, the conquerors felt a sort of *irresistible incli-*

*nation to assimilate themselves to the conquered*, by assuming their manners, their language, and even their dress. The Anglo-Normans made themselves Irish—they liked to exchange their feudal titles of earl and baron for patronymic surnames; the Dubourgs called themselves M·William Bourg; the De Veres, Mac Swyne; the De Langles, Mac Costilagh; the Fitz-Urses, Mac Mahon; and the Geraldines, Mac Gheroit. They grew fond of the Irish singing and poetry, invited the bards to their tables, and took nurses and teachers for their children from among the women of the country. The Normans of England, who were *so haughty in their behaviour to the Saxons*, called this *degenerating*.”\*

Yet a people so singularly amiable and interesting were held in a state of outlawry for hundreds of years, in order to keep up the “English interest.” An act was passed forbidding the English “to take merchandise or things to be sold to fair, or market, or other place among the Irish enemies”—viz. the whole Irish nation! Another prohibited all conversation with the natives even in time of peace. These acts (10th Henry VI.) were passed two hundred and sixty years after the invasion of Ireland under Henry the Second, so immitigable was their national animosity that time could not mollify it; the experience of centuries but added to its intensity. Even so late as the 28th Henry VIII. in 1537, an act was passed “against marrying, or fostering with or to Irishmen.” On this Mr. O’Connell pleasantly remarks:—“The legislature was not so ungallant as to prohibit marriages with Irishwomen. *That* would have been inflicting the severest possible punishment upon themselves; and considering the natural antipathy that the English in those days entertained against everything Irish, it furnishes the strongest proof that the Irishwomen at that time afforded the same models of beauty and goodness for which they are celebrated at this time.”† If a *naturalised* Irishman happened to kill or rob, he might be treated as an “Irish enemy”—that is, slain on the spot. Worse than this—if a man were  
 • imagined to be *going* to rob, he might be murdered with impunity. Again, if an Englishman were robbed or injured by a native, he might “reprise himself on the whole sept and nation!” This was enacted in 1475; and ten years after the Parliament of Dublin passed a law, authorising the men of Ross to “reprise themselves against robbers.” “In other words,” says Sir William Betham, “they might rob the innocent to compensate themselves for being plundered.”

\* Norman Conquest, Conclusion, sect. 4.

† Ireland and the Irish, Duffy’s edition, vol. 1, p. 57.



In the legislation of the Parliament of the Pale, a body without constituents, self-elected and irresponsible except to the English court, the sublime of cruelty and terror is sometimes relieved by touches of the ridiculous—but all having the same object, to destroy every vestige of nationality, so that the people could not eat, sleep, or dress without feeling the iron pressure of foreign tyranny. Thus in 1446 it was enacted at Trim, that “any man who does not keep the upper lip shaved may be treated as an Irish enemy.” Were this law now in force it would press hard on Colonel Sibthorpe and Lord Cardigan, and a whole tribe of military and would-be military dandies. And thus change the fashions of the world! The very exquisites of *ton* now glory in imitating the hairy barbarism of the “wild Irish!”

Now let it be remembered, by those who insist that the question at issue between the Repealers of Ireland and our English rulers, is a *religious question*—that these savage laws were passed by a Catholic assembly against Catholics; by an assembly, too, in which the influence of the spiritual peers was paramount, and at a time when the distinctions between Norman and Saxon were fast fading away in England, where the amalgamation of the two races was carefully fostered by government, and where even the language of the conquerors was forbidden to be used any longer in the courts of law. So bitter and enduring was the antipathy of race in Ireland! According to a custom called *coin and livery*, the English soldiers were quartered on the people, their demands for provisions and money being regulated by their own arbitrary will; for they had no other pay, and possessed unquestioned power to extort what they pleased. “This oppression was not temporary, nor limited either to place or time; but because there was *everywhere a continual war*, either offensive or defensive, \* \* \* it became universal and perpetual, and indeed was the most heavy oppression that was ever used in any christian or heathen kingdom. \* \* \* The plagues of Egypt, though they were grievous, were but of short continuance; but the plagues of Ireland lasted four hundred years together.” This extortion made the land waste and the people idle; for who would till or manure the ground, when the soldiers in one night consumed the fruits of all his labours? Hence came depopulation, the banishment, and extirpation of the better sort of subjects, while the hopeless peasantry looked on vacantly in idleness, or abandoned their homes for a life of beggary in foreign countries.\*

There is too much reason to believe that the following frightful

\* Sir John Davies' Hist. Tract, pp. 131, 132, 133.

picture by the Rev. Dr. Leland, the Protestant historian, is not overdrawn :—" The oppression exercised with impunity in every particular ; the depredations everywhere committed among the inferior orders of the people, not by open enemies alone, but by those who called themselves friends and protectors ; and who justified their outrages on the plea of lawful authority ; their avarice and cruelty ; their plundering and massacres, were still more ruinous than the defeat of an army or the loss of a city. The wretched sufferers had neither power to repel nor law to restrain or vindicate their injuries. In times of general commotion, laws the most wisely framed and equitably administered, are but of little moment. But now the very source of public justice was corrupted and poisoned."\*

Martial law was common in these dreadful times. Sheriffs and others dressed in a little brief authority, arrested and hanged the innocent in great numbers, converting their confiscated property to their own uses. During the reign of Elizabeth the natives, formerly denominated the Irish enemy, came to be called *Rebels*. Many a time did the Queen's forces go forth "burning the country," or cutting down the crops with their swords, and slaughtering every man, woman and child they met. But, as wasting fire and the remorseless sword were insufficient to exterminate the nation, the horrible purpose was conceived of *creating a famine*, and thereby consuming them away from the land ! We may judge of the shockingly demoralised state of public feeling in regard to the Irish, and the estimation in which their lives were held, when the poet Spenser could stifle all the noble sympathies of genius, and the very instincts of humanity, and deliberately recommend this awful method to rid the land of God's immortal creatures ! " Being kept," said he, " from manurance, and their cattle from running abroad, by this hard restraint, *they would quietly consume themselves, and devour one another !*"†

Just think of the rulers of a country sending their soldiers to prevent the inhabitants from manuring or tilling the ground ; from pasturing their cattle, or gathering in the harvest ! Yet the inhuman advice of Spenser was acted on. Through centuries of suffering the people maintained their independence, and struggled for their national existence ; and when they were suffered to repose, diligently cultivated their lands, even in Leinster, on the borders of the pale, and established, says Leland, " an unusual regularity and plenty in their districts." But the crops were cut down, or burned ; the country was

\* Leland, book 2, c. 3.

† Spenser's State of Ireland, pp. 72, 165.

traversed by the royal troops, who drove all the horses, cattle, sheep, goats, &c. before them, killing every human being they met, and leaving nothing but ruin in their track !\*

Famine and pestilence came quickly after, to devour those who had fled from the sword of the spoiler. Let Englishmen themselves tell the story of this calamity :—"The land itself, which, *before* those wars, was populous, well inhabited, and rich in all the good blessings of God, being *plenteous of corn, full of cattle*, well stored with fish and sundry other good commodities, is now become waste and barren, yielding no fruits, the pastures no cattle, the air no birds ; the seas, though full of fish, yet to them yielding nothing. Finally, every way the curse of God was so great, and the land so barren, both of man and beast, that whosoever did travel from the one end to the other of all Munster, he would not meet *any man, woman or child*, saving in towns and cities ; nor yet see any beasts, but the very wolves, the foxes, and other like ravening beasts, many of them lay dead, being famished, and the residue gone elsewhere."†

Hear Spenser himself describing the dreadful reality which his poetic fancy had pictured. It seems too dreadful, even for "a stoney heart." "Notwithstanding, the same was a most rich and plentiful country, full of corn and cattle ; yet, ere one year and a half, they were brought to such wretchedness, as that any stoney heart would rue the same. Out of every corner of the woods and glens, they came creeping forth upon their hands, for their legs could not bear them ; they looked like anatomies of death ; they spoke like ghosts crying out of their graves ; *they did eat the dead carrions*, happy where they could find them ; *yea, and one another soon after!* insomuch as the very carcases they spared not to scrape out of their graves, and if they found a plot of watercresses or shamrocks, there they flocked as to a feast for a time ; yet, not able to continue there withal, that in short space, there was none almost left, AND A MOST POPULOUS AND PLENTIFUL COUNTRY, suddenly left void of man and beast."‡ Well may we exclaim with Cowper—

" There is no flesh in man's obdurate heart—  
He does not feel for MAN."

But we turn away willingly from these sickening horrors. Those who wish to see the hideous details of English tyranny brought fully

\* Cox's History of Ireland, p. 428 ; Carew's Hibernia Paccata, pp. 645, 659.

† Holinshed, vi. 459

‡ Spenser's State of Ireland, p. 165.



out, with proofs and illustrations in accumulating and overwhelming force, must read Mr. O'Connell's *Memoir of Ireland*.

But the fatal hour of Ireland's destiny came at last. She sold her life dear to the enemy after a gallant struggle during the sad vicissitudes of four hundred years.

The result of English policy is expressed in the words of Sir John Davies:—"Thus had the Queen's army, under Lord Mountjoy, broken and absolutely subdued all the lords and chieftains of the Irishry.—Whereupon, *the multitude, being brayed, as it were in a mortar, with sword, famine, and pestilence together*, submitted themselves to the English government, received the laws and magistrates, and most gladly embraced the king's pardon, and peace in all parts of the realm, with demonstrations of joy and comfort."

What was the relative condition of the nation, and the Pale previous to these desolating wars, in the time of Henry VIII.? We are enabled to answer this question most satisfactorily from a volume of state papers lately published by authority, and from which large extracts may be seen in "Ireland and the Irish," vol. 1, 85, &c. I shall quote a few of the most striking facts. First, then, there were more than *sixty* countries called "Regions," in Ireland, inhabited by "the king's Irish enemies, some as big as a shire, some more, some less, unto a little; where reigneth more than sixty captains, whereof some calleth themselves kings, some king's peers, in their language, some princes, some dukes, some arch-dukes, that liveth only by the sworde, and obeyeth to no other temporal person, but only to himself that is strong; and every of the said captains maketh peace or war by himself, and holdeth by sworde, and hath imperial jurisdiction within his rene," &c.

In the same condition exactly were thirty "great captains of the *English* noble folk," living as princes with sovereign power and independent jurisdiction within their respective territories. The counties that had either repelled or thrown off the English yoke are the following: "Waterford, Cork, Kilkenny, Limerick, Kerry, Connaught, Ulster, Carlow, Monaghan, Westmeath, half of Dublin, half of Kildare, half of Wexford." All the *English* of the said counties were "of Irish habit, of Irish language, and Irish conditions, except the cities and the walled towns." The *half of five counties* only belonged to the English king; but "*all* the common people of the said half counties that obeyed the king's laws were, for the most part, of Irish birth, of Irish habit, and of Irish language."

It might be inferred that because the vast majority of the Irish people at that time disowned English authority, they were living

without law, and that in this wild anarchy neither person nor property was safe. But what, in fact, was the internal condition of the country then, and what the moral character of its people? Mr. O'Connell may well glory in the hereditary virtues of the race, of whose right to self-government he has been so long the triumphant champion, while quoting the following decisive testimonies from Englishmen and Protestants :—

Borlase, a bitter antagonist, admits that “the Irish themselves were a people *peaceable, harmless, and affable to strangers*, and to all *pious and good*, whilst they retained the religion of their forefathers.” How cruel then to make war by physical force and corruption against the *religion* of a people—whatever that religion may be—to subjugate *conscience*, and destroy in the soul the sacred principle of responsibility to God! With an uneducated people especially, piety is not only the best, but the only sure guardian of morality, and religion the most powerful restraint against crime.

Baron Finglass, who was Chief Baron of the Exchequer, under Henry VIII., says: “It is a great abuse and reproach that the laws and statutes made in this land are not observed nor kept, after the making of them, eight days: which matter is one of the destructions of the *Englishmen* of this land: and divers *Irishmen* do observe and keep such laws and statutes, which they make upon hills in their own country, *firm and stable, without breaking them for any fee or reward.*”\*

Lord Coke declares that there is no nation of the Christian world that are greater lovers of justice than the Irish are, which virtue must, of course, be accompanied by many others.”† Nor are they prone to be insubordinate or disaffected if they get anything like fair play; for, says the celebrated Sir John Davies, “there is no nation of people under the sun that doth love equal and indifferent justice better than the Irish; nor will rest better satisfied with the execution thereof, although it be against themselves.”‡

This is not the declamation of an Irish patriot, but the sober decision of an English Attorney-General in Ireland, whose office furnished the best opportunities of knowing the truth, while his position and his prejudices would naturally render him reluctant to acknowledge it.

On this part of my subject I cannot do better than avail myself of the accurate researches of the honourable and learned author of ‘Ire-

\* Baron Finglass's *Hibernican*, p. 51.

† Cox's *Inst.* b. 4, p. 349.

‡ Davies' *Hist. Tracts*, p. 213.

land and the Irish:—"There has been lately published," says he, "by the Irish Archæological Society, in the first volume of their tracts relating to Ireland, a small work entitled, 'A brief Description of Ireland, made in the year 1589, by Robert Payne,' from which I select two extracts that confirm strongly the praises bestowed upon the Irish love of justice:—'Nothing is more pleasing unto them than to hear of good justices placed amongst them. They have a common saying which, I am persuaded, they speak unfeignedly, which is—*Defend me and spend me*: meaning from the oppression of the worser sort of our countrymen. They are obedient to the laws, *so that you may travel through all the land*, without any danger or injury offered of the very worst Irish, and greatly relieved of the best.'—p. 4.

"My next quotation is peculiarly interesting at the present moment. It shows what the corporations of Ireland were in Catholic times, before Protestantism and exclusion were the ruling impulses:—'But as touching their government in their corporations where they bear rule, is done with such *wisdom, equity and justice* as demerits worthy commendations. For I myself, divers times, have seen in several places within their jurisdictions well near twenty cases decided at one sitting, with such indifferency that for the most part both plaintiff and defendant have departed contented. Yet many that make show of peace, and desire to live by blood, *do utterly mislike this or any* good thing that the poor Irishman doth.'"

Sir John Perrot was a just governor, and of the results of his administration Hooker thus speaks:—"Every man with a white stick only in his hand, and with great treasures, might and did travel without fear or danger where he would, as the writer hereof by trial, knew to be true." In fine, Sir John Davies, speaking of the result of his own experience, declares his conviction that one circuit in England furnished more malefactors worthy of death than the whole thirty-two counties of Ireland. "For," said he, "the truth is, that in time of peace, the Irish are more fearful to offend the law than the English, or any other nation whatsoever."\*

We have seen that the Irish were an independent and self-governed people in the reign of Henry VIII., that they reconquered nearly the whole of the country and hemmed in the English settlers to the narrowest limits. Moreover their kings and chiefs were warlike, and we are assured by the high authority so often quoted, Sir John Davies, that the people were endowed with extraordinary abilities of body and mind. Edmund Spenser himself bears this remarkable testimony

\* Ireland and the Irish, vol 1, p. 119. Davies' *Discovery*, &c., p. 270.



concerning them:—"I have heard some great warriors say, that in all the services which they had seen abroad in foreign countries, *they never saw a more comely man than the Irishman, nor that cometh on more bravely* to his charge." Why then, it may be asked, did not this gallant nation rise as with the heart of one man, and utterly expel or extirpate the petty English colony that occupied a few towns and castles along the coast in the reign of Henry VIII.? And how is it that they suffered themselves to be utterly subdued and almost destroyed in the time of Elizabeth? True, the fearful work of destruction cost that haughty and unrelenting queen three millions sterling, an enormous sum in those days—and also an immense effusion of English blood. Still, such a people ought to have defied all the armies that Britain could bring against them, especially during a time when her enemies on the continent were powerful.

Ireland would have defied them had she been UNITED—but she was divided and ruined; still her fall was rather the work of famine than the sword. Mr. O'Connell has written so well upon this point, and conveyed a lesson of warning so apropos to the present times, that I shall be excused for quoting it at length:—

"When the English party was strong, it endeavoured by force to put down such confederacy. But the *forcible* attempts were, in general successfully resisted by the Irish; who gained the futile glory of many a victory over some of the most accomplished commanders of the English forces; but these defeats taught the English officers that cunning which is called political wisdom. They assailed the avarice, or fomented the resentments of particular chieftains; and succeeded in detaching them from the general cause. These chieftains betrayed their companions in arms; joined their forces with those of the English; and participated in the councils and united with the force, which by degrees broke down the power of the other chieftains. But the traitors obtained no permanent profit; and no length of fidelity to the English commanders secured them the confidence or the kindness of their unprincipled seducers."\*

\* Memoirs of Ireland, p. 91, Duffy's Edition.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE REFORMATION.

“Wars to *impose* religion by force are the most execrable violation of the rights of mankind: wars to defend it, are the most sacred exercise of these rights.”—SIR JAMES MAC INTOSH.

WE have hitherto traced the deadly antagonism of *races* between the English and the Irish; we have now arrived at a period when national antipathies were inflamed by a new element—*religious intolerance*. It is a great mistake to suppose that this *superseded* the former. By no means; it was *superinduced* upon the old hereditary hatred, which remained in all its force, intensified by the passions of persecution—thenceforward wearing the mask of religion, and, on the Anglican side, bearing the name of PROTESTANTISM. “The English interest,” therefore, was now called “the Protestant interest;” and the Irish wars were all *religious*. Every movement for civil liberty or nationality was regarded as an attempt to establish “Popish ascendancy;” and all the bloody atrocities of political oppression, were to maintain the principles of the Reformation! The Protestants waged war against “Popery” as the mother of *Rebellion*; the Catholics could see no distinction between “Protestantism” and *Tyranny*. Each party attributed to the *creed* of the other every crime that might be committed or could be imagined. In this respect both laboured under a delusion. Religion was but the decent robe that covered an old abomination. Satan had not departed—he was only transformed into an angel of light, and leagued with another devil worse than himself.

“From Dermot’s crime to Tudor’s time  
Our clans were our perdition;  
Religion’s name, since then, became  
The pretext for division.”—T. DAVIS.

In past ages of ignorance and strife, men *could* not see this distinction between things sacred and things secular; at the present day, there are many interested parties who *will* not see it. The Protestant side of this question is fairly represented by Mr. Montgomery Martin,

who has devoted a portion of his work on Ireland before and after the Union, to a history of "the Irish Church." It may be instructive to see his account of the matter, and while we admire his feelings towards Catholics and his notions of religious liberty, let us not forget that he was earnestly recommended by the Marquis Wellesley to Lord John Russell, as admirably fitted to assist him in the government of Ireland !

Mark the profound knowledge of history displayed in the following sentences :—"Henry (II.) was in no hurry to accept a sovereignty which he *must* have been conscious ought not to be assumed by the Bishop of Rome ; and *therefore* ! for nearly 20 years the Bull of Adrian was unheeded." p. 309.

What were the motives of Henry VIII., in casting off the supremacy of the pope ? Were they not passionate resentment and imperious lust ? So says history ; but listen to Mr. Montgomery Martin :—"Henry, *conscious* of the absurdity of the pretensions of the Bishop of Rome, perceiving how the people of England and Ireland were plundered by various impositions, and naturally indignant at the despotic power exercised in his own kingdom, through Papal agents, resolved in the years 1532, and 1533, on the abolition of 'Peter's pence,' 'first fruits,' 'tithes,' and various other taxes levied by the church of Rome, under false and fraudulent pretences." p. 315. Not a hint does this cautious oracle give about Henry's *wives* ! He leaves out the part of Hamlet by special desire.

According to him nothing could be more facile or complete than the work of Reformation in Ireland. "The laity every where frequented the churches. Multitudes of the priests adopted the prescribed changes, and continued to officiate in their former cures ; and the majority of the prelates, leading or *following* the POPULAR OPINION, retained their sees, and exercised their functions according to the reformed ritual." p. 319. Yet, notwithstanding this current of popular opinion in favour of the Reformation, we are told (p. 335.) that as soon as a good opportunity occurred, "*all* the Irish, and several of the *English* race cast off the mask of submission ; and the cry of 'Ireland for the Irish' was raised by Tyrone, in 1603, as it is now under the pretended garb of 'peace' and 'loyalty,' in 1843." And no wonder, for our oracle tells us that the prelates, who in the reign of Henry followed or led popular opinion, were "still at heart Romanists."

He moreover assures us that the penal laws were enacted "for the mere preservation of human life, *without any reference whatever to religion* !" p. 322. Yet, on the next page but one we find this champion of the Union, whose work was to blow up the "Repeal impos-



ture," recording the fact that, in 1559, the Irish parliament, under Elizabeth, passed "an act *agaynste suche persons*, as shall *unreverentlye speake* agaynste the Sacraments of the bodye and blode of Christe \* \* \* and for the receivynge thereof, *under bothe kyndes*." But what signify enactments to suppress public opinion and silence free discussion? Nothing can be more legitimate in the estimation of Lord Wellesley's pet-reformer for Ireland, provided always that their victims are Papists.

*Victims*, did I say? What calumny! There were no victims under the benignant reign of Elizabeth! Her treatment of Ireland was most tolerant and pacific. "There is in no one instance a harsh or an intolerant expression; no life was taken, or even threatened for *religious* opinions, but every effort was made to instruct the people and settle the country." In 1560, two bishops, Meath and Kildare, refused to take the oath of supremacy; and oh, admirable clemency! "For this," saith Mr. Montgomery Martin, "they were *not* beheaded." (p. 325.) Previous to the Rebellion of 1641, "the Romanists laboured under no disadvantages (but such as are?) inseparable from a state religion. *They were simply required by law, under a penalty of one shilling, to go to the national church, and hear the Scriptures read and taught, conformable to the usage of primitive Christians.* Even this enactment was not enforced." p. 339.

Query, *could* it be enforced? Now, certainly, to be obliged to attend the services of an abhorred religion, under the penalty of five or ten shillings of our money, for every time of absence, and the still greater penalty of being obnoxious to the fatal suspicion of treason, may seem a very rational requirement—a very great proof of "clemency and justice," to persons with little money and no conscience; but I fancy very few at the present day would agree with Mr. M. Martin, in regarding them with complacency as "inseparable from a state religion!"

According to this most admirable instructor, every attempt of the Irish to defend their rights, or to recover their liberties, was inspired by the fiendish spirit of Popish persecution, delighting in Protestant blood; while not the least tincture of religious bigotry ever stained the benevolent policy of England. We had thought that Cromwell's atrocities, and his profane thanksgiving to the God of mercy, over heaps of reeking carnage, were to be regarded as instances of moral perversion, belonging to an age of social convulsion and religious fanaticism, which had passed away for ever, and that in these enlightened and peaceful times, they could excite nothing but horror in any Christian mind. We were mistaken. Mr. Montgomery Martin proclaims

Oliver Cromwell as the saviour of Ireland: by Him "Ireland was saved from final ruin! The short-sighted moralist may condemn the fearful slaughter at Drogheda; but, in reality, it was AN ACT OF MERCY to all Ireland!" p. 351.

This truthful and philanthropic defender of the Union, is so intimately acquainted with our affairs, past and present, that he calls Dr. Leland, "the Roman Catholic historian." p. 352. His geography is on a par with his history and charity; for he tells us, that "the objects sought by the court of Rome, were the same as those now professed—namely, 'Ireland for the Irish.' This pithy but comprehensive expression, meant that Ireland was no longer to be a part of England!! and that the Romish and not the English church was to be supreme." p. 340.

I should not have dwelt so long on the inexplicable ignorance, the daring quackery, the base and brutal bigotry of this writer, if influential parties had not disgraced themselves by thrusting him forward into a factitious importance, as the slanderer of the Irish nation, and the wilful falsifier of its history and statistics. Besides, he appropriately represents the lowest portion of the daily diminishing remnant of a party once powerful in this country, whose memory is stored with the traditionary horrors of '98, and whose watch-word is "no Popery." With a cautious suppression of truth, and a bold assertion of falsehood, he has appealed to those portions of Irish history that are fitted, with the aid of his distortions, to excite the passions of the Protestant people. But with the learned and eloquent Alderman Butt, we most heartily say—"Let the memory of past wrongs be forgotten; away with the evil spirit that would wander among the tombs, to hold communion only with evil things of other days, and by an infernal necromancy call from the grave the hideous spectres of forgotten crimes to disturb the present generation with the guilt and the passions of the past."\*

The natural consequence of such violent extremes on one side, is to produce similar extremes on the other. Never was history so perverted by party spirit as the Irish. The oppressor has told the story in his own way; and his party read nothing but what he has found it his interest to record. This has forced the oppressed to become an advocate in self-defence, and to state only the side of the question most favourable to himself. In the meantime truth has suffered, and animosity has been kept alive. The time is come, however, when this subject must be faithfully dealt with by Catholics and Protestants

\* Discussion in the Dublin Corporation on the Repeal of the Union, p. 99.

alike. We have been misunderstanding and misrepresenting one another too long. Religion must be kept apart in its own place, and be left to stand on its own heavenly basis. The national unity of all sects is an essential preliminary to self-government. But this cannot exist without perfect and cordial toleration on both sides. If a man's religion is to be assailed either openly or by implication, as the handmaid of tyranny or treason, by men with whom he is associated to gain a common political object, how can he endure this without a base surrender of conscience? If Catholicism be denounced as vile idolatry, will not every honest Catholic take fire at the insult? Shall the Protestant sit tame and silent when the Reformation is described on a common political platform, as the diabolical fountain of all immorality? He will ask—If it were so, how could so many men equally illustrious for their learning and virtue have been its devoted professors? How could so many nations in which Protestantism has flourished for three centuries, have been distinguished as they have been for social morality, and for innumerable monuments of benevolence and piety?

That Irish Catholics are intensely devoted to their creed, ages of persecution have amply demonstrated. But if they think that Irish Protestants are not in earnest in their religion, too, and ready to suffer and die for it, they will not only sin against Christian charity, but commit a great political error, fatal to the hope of nationality.

Protestants believe that their creed has been substantially held in the Christian world throughout all ages; and has no more dependance on Henry VIII. or real connexion with his character and crimes, than it has with those of Dermot Mac Murrough. Catholics may smile at this. Nevertheless it is what Irish Protestants honestly believe—a fact which it is important to bear in mind in coming to an understanding with them as fellow-workers in the great cause of Ireland. Hence I humbly submit that Irish Catholics should carefully distinguish the reformed faith from that secular, sensual, intolerant and cruel power which in Ireland, for purposes of policy, usurped and desecrated its name.

Dr. Smiles has clearly shown in his History, that the English church in Ireland was as exclusive, as oppressive, as anti-Irish, when it was Catholic as ever it has been or could be since. We have seen that, under a Roman Catholic government, the natives of this country were refused the rights of subjects, even when to obtain them they offered a large sum of money to the king. It was enacted in 1417 that if a "mere Irish priest" were presented to a living, he should forfeit the emoluments. So far did these proud Anglo-Norman churchmen carry



their hatred to the people, that they would not allow one of them to enter their monasteries, nunneries, or cathedrals. It is important to advert to these facts ; because they show that religion is only the pretext of English oppression. So violent was their antipathy to Ireland in Catholic times, that the kindly charities of a common faith, the sacred associations and sympathies that draw all men as brethren round the same altar, could scarcely mitigate their intense, undying hatred, fed as it was by plunder, and fostered by foreign power.

Nor did this intolerance of race arise from anything repulsive in the Irish character. We have seen that it was, on the contrary, most attractive ; and history records that the same treatment, or worse, was received by the conquered Saxons and Britons in England till the vanquished and conquering races blended into one people, in obedience to influences which were, unhappily, never allowed to reach Ireland. In confirmation of this let me quote one more passage from Thierry :—Edmer, a contemporary writer, speaking of the appointment of a great number of abbots, “ in the forty-first year of the Frenchman’s rule in England,” says : “ Of these new pastors the greater part were wolves rather than shepherds. That such was not the intention of the king who appointed them we must believe ; but it would have been still easier to believe it, had he taken even a few of them from among the natives of this country. But the difference of nation opposed an insurmountable barrier : if you were English no degree of virtue or merit could raise you, not even to the meanest office, while the man of foreign birth was deemed worthy of everything. We live in evil days.”\*

Englishmen ! Such was once the condition of your Saxon ancestors ; and such has been the condition of the native Irish for six centuries. Suppose Divine Providence were to suffer some great revolution to sweep over your soil again, like the Norman conquest, filling all your offices in church and state with insolent, and rapacious, and upstart Frenchmen.—How would you bear it ? You would not be the slaves to pine in these “ chains unholy !” We appeal then to your sense of justice to assist us in this peaceful struggle to burst *ours*.

Dr. Smiles has well described the position of the English church in Ireland—the church of the Pale—and its relation to the rest of the country from the conquest to the Reformation, during which time the Anglo-Normans here would at any moment have said *amen* to the celebrated sentence of Lord Lyndhurst—“ The Irish are aliens in blood, language, and religion !” This old enmity reigns even still

\* Norman Conquest, p. 142, English Edition.

among the Catholic lords of English descent, and is, perhaps, the true secret of their coldness towards Mr. O'Connell in the whole course of his agitation.

Speaking of the two Catholic Churches then in the country, Dr. Smiles, says: "The former was the Church of the invaders—a badge of conquest; the latter was the native institution based on the affections of the people, and at all times found ranged on their side in opposition to despotic power and authority. From the first, then, the two Churches, though both Catholic, were greatly at variance with each other, and were separated by differences in race, language, political feelings, and even in ecclesiastical discipline. All attempts to assimilate them to each other completely failed."\*

There was little done in the work of Reformation in Ireland during Henry's reign. The agents of Edward VI., or rather of Somerset, his guardian, were more intent on this object; but the early death of that prince, and the accession of Mary, cut short their operations.—While this queen was burning heretics in England, the great body of the clergy there having suddenly wheeled round at her bidding, the Reformation was quietly abolished in Ireland, but with so little persecution, that many English Protestants took refuge in this country from the cruel fanaticism that hunted, tortured, and burned their countrymen at home. To the unfortunate natives of Ireland, however, it mattered little what religion was uppermost. The English interest was maintained with the same pertinacity and the same cruelty. The work of extirpation and confiscation went steadily on, whether the bloody hands that held the sword of power were Protestant or Catholic.

Elizabeth ascended the throne of England, and lo, as if by magic, the whole priesthood of that nation, having received another touch from the hand of royalty, found themselves Protestant once more! This was the third *turn*, and it had a charm in it, for they have retained the same position ever since.

"In Ireland, also," says Leland, "the far greater part of the prelates were such as quietly enjoyed their sees by conforming occasionally to different modes of religion." The great body of the priests and people, however, were not so docile, but they suffered for their contumacy.

During this reign there were many rebellions—partial, abortive, and driftless, provoked by intolerable local oppression—outbursts of

\* History of Ireland, p. 60.

passion and desperation, resulting only in direful vengeance, and in heavy bondage to those that *unhappily* escaped the slaughter. The atrocities already adverted to, issuing in the reduction of Ireland to a desert, a thousand times more dreary than if it had never been the scene of happy homesteads, may, no doubt, be ascribed in some measure to the tyrant's plea, *necessity*. When England threw off the Pope's authority, she forfeited her right to Ireland, for she took it as a fief of the Apostolic See, and held it as its vassal. According to the custom of the times the sovereign pontiff prepared to vindicate his claims with spiritual weapons. The queen had been excommunicated four times. Plenary indulgences were offered to all who should engage in war against her authority; and Gregory XIII. had himself equipped a fleet to invade this country; while Spain, then the greatest naval power in Europe, terrified England with her famous Armada. Besides all this, Ireland then abounded with foreign ecclesiastics, who exerted all their eloquence to rouse the Catholics to rise in defence of their religion, stimulating their courage by hopes of aid from abroad, which hopes, by a singular fatality, have always proved delusive to this people, and terminated in far worse than disappointment.

These proceedings naturally exasperated and alarmed the government. They felt that not only the "Protestant interest," but the lives and properties of the settlers were at stake. It was *fear*, therefore, the most cruel of the passions, that gave the command to spare no life—and made the soldiers so eager "upon the vile rebels"—that they did not allow even the women to escape, and sometimes not the children. It was this that blew up against the astonished heavens, the lurid flames that issued from the nation's funeral pile. Read, then, in the ashes and burned carcasses, over which a Christian queen now reigned, the horrors of civil war inflamed by religion!

Learn thence how needful and sacred is the task of conciliation—of popular education—of legislative amelioration—and the solemn duty of executive justice and impartiality. How studiously should the amalgamation of hostile races be promoted! How earnestly should intolerance be repressed! How diligently should all men seek to multiply within the bosom of society, the moral guarantees of perpetual peace!

The miserable remnant of the population, "the refuse of the sword, and its attendant horrors," now quietly attended church to evade the penalties inflicted on the absent. After such a terrific prelude to the Reformation, they would have danced to any tune their masters might please to pipe. They cared little in what unknown tongue—English



or Latin—prayers were read, since their nation had been smitten down, and their venerable language proscribed, as the remembrancer of their long vanished glory.

Those Protestants who have a heart to exult in this passive conformity, the effect not of conviction—for, of a creed couched in a strange language, they could know nothing—but of overwhelming coercion and terror—should remember that the means by which it was accomplished have entailed upon Protestantism centuries of execrating hatred.

By a strange infatuation, in which an extravagant wish has been father to a still more extravagant thought, Dean Murray and other writers would teach us that the existing Protestant establishment, represents the ancient Catholic Church of Ireland, the popular institution which, as we have already seen, maintained a perpetual antagonism to the anti-national Church of the Pale.

It is hard to imagine how any intelligent mind can come to this conclusion, when it is recollected that the Reformation has never yet taken effect among the native Irish! Within the ancient Pale chiefly, in the maritime towns, and among the English settlers alone, was Protestantism embraced at first, and to these limits, (with the exception of Ulster, more recently colonised,) it has been almost confined to the present day. The Church of England is not a native Church in Ireland; nor is its creed “racy of the soil.” Indeed, Sir James Parsons, after making some fruitless efforts to propagate Protestantism in Connaught, declared that it was impossible, as “the very soil was Popish.” Now, it was in that Province, above all places, that foreign influence was ever most steadily resisted, and nativeism was most powerful. Protestant episcopalianism has never been more than the religion of a colony in this country, and such, to a great extent, it remains at the present moment. Not, therefore, to the original church, planted by St. Patrick, and cherished by the people; not to that church which so often blessed the banner of revolt, and sanctified the struggles of patriotism, whose priests were hunted like wolves, whose people were slaughtered like sheep—not to this truly, intensely IRISH Church, has the Protestant establishment succeeded.

No—that establishment is the church of the Anglo-Norman colony—a temple built from *Irish ruins*, in which are hung up the trophies of foreign conquest, the detested sanctuary of the “English interest,” on whose blood-stained altar Irish nationality has been scornfully immolated! In assuming this position, she became the scape-goat of both English and Papal guilt—the inheritor of centuries of national

hatred ; she said, in effect, "On my head be the blood of the Irish NATION !" In former days, the prelates of the Anglo-Irish Church were, at their consecration, sworn on the Host, to excommunicate and curse all persons, whatsoever, who should offend the King of England. And, now, the strongest argument that can be used in her defence in parliament, is that she is the guardian of English power, the guarantee of Irish provincialism, the bond of connexion between the two kingdoms. The *name* and the *creed* are changed—but, the Anti-Irish spirit and denationalizing mission are the same. Never did church sustain a position so unfortunate ; nor clergy labour under such fearful moral disabilities ! They are now aware of this, but instead of repenting and redeeming themselves from their English bonds, by becoming liberal and truly national ; they put history on the rack to force a testimony in favour of a childish theory, by which they vainly hope to escape from their obligation to Rome, for their boasted and pride-inspiring apostolic succession, and to make out a superior claim to the confidence of the Irish people !

Let us now see how the Reformed Church proved herself to be the ancient and native institution. In the twenty-eighth year of Henry VIII., cap. xv., an act was passed to abolish the *Irish* habit and apparel, and requiring the people to keep their hair cropped. It provided further that spiritual promotions should be given to those *only* who spoke the *English* language, and who would keep or cause to be kept "a school to learn English." Again, in the second of Elizabeth, cap. xiii., A.D. 1559—60, it was enacted that, inasmuch as ministers speaking the English language could not be procured in divers places, and it was desirable that the people might have the common prayers "in such language as they might best understand," provided also (and always) that the same may NOT BE IN THEIR NATIVE LANGUAGE ;" therefore, it should be "lawful to say or use all their common and open prayer in the LATIN TONGUE !!"

That is, it was desirable that the people should have public worship performed in such language as they could *best* understand, provided always that it was not in the only language which they *did* understand ! Either the Irish peasantry must have been then a most learned people, having a respectable acquaintance with the Latin language, or they must have been utterly ignorant of English. Such was the Irishism of Elizabeth's church ! And yet, Mr. Montgomery Martin assures us, that in her reign "every effort was made to instruct the people ! and settle the country ;" \* and he actually asserts

\* Ireland Before and After the Union, p. 325.

that the church of Ireland was, in fact, restored by Henry VIII., among other things to—what does the reader suppose?—"Freedom from foreign language!!"\*

If we can imagine anything more monstrous than the conduct of the English government, in regard to the Irish language at that time, it is the ignorance or audacity of its advocate in 1843.

Let us listen, however, to an author of common sense and integrity, who, though a dignitary of the Established Church and a strong Conservative, who bitterly laments the passing of Catholic Emancipation—yet takes a rational and Christian view of these truly barbarous enactments:—

"Had the great enemy of truth," he says, "been the concoctor and passer of these parliamentary and royal enactments, no surer method could have been devised to arrest at once the progress of the Reformation in a country whose prejudices, feelings, and best interests were thus alike insulted. The interfering with non-essential customs, which long habit had made a second nature, would of itself have unsheathed the sword of resistance in the hands of a half-civilized and enthusiastic people. But as if this were not enough, every avenue of light and knowledge, under the withering statute-book of England, was at once closed up by their being *deprived* of instruction in their native language; and either the *hateful* English, or the equally unintelligible Latin being substituted in its place.

"Can we," he continues, "can we suppose anything less than *judicial blindness* to have prompted measures calculated at once to exasperate prejudice, and involve in midnight darkness a people wedded to their own customs and fond to excess of their own language? One generation of professing (but alas, uninstructed) Protestants passed away and another succeeded, brought up in a state of *greater ignorance* and *spiritual destitution* than their Romish forefathers—*deprived of all means of grace*, and stung to the quick by the dishonour cast upon their national dress and language. Can we wonder at the effects produced—effects which England too justly feels the bitterness of, even at the present day?"†

Well—what was the state of religion in the Protestant colony itself? What was that famous *Protestant interest*, for the sake of which all national interests have been systematically sacrificed from the Reformation until now? In answering this question we must not

\* Ireland Before and After the Union, p. 319.

† Outlines of the History of the Catholic Church in Ireland, by the Rev. R. Murray, D. D., Dean of Ardagh, p. 125.



forget that many of the English and German settlers were adventurers—soldiers of fortune, accustomed to the licentiousness of camps and free-quarters, and infected with the usual vices of men, whom conquest had suddenly lifted from poverty to wealth and power. To purify and mingle in one Christian brotherhood such seething masses of population, in those unquiet times, required uncommon wisdom, zeal, firmness, and piety in the ministers of religion. But, alas! no such qualities were then possessed by the Reformed clergy.

Spenser describes them in his day as being all “in a manner mere laymen,” addicted to secular pursuits, neglecting their religious duties, and “generally lewd, licentious, and disordered.” He says, the benefices were so small, that those who would come over, were “mostly unlearned men of bad note, for which they forsook England,” and he pertinently asks:—“What good could any minister do among *them*, who either cannot understand him, or will not hear him?” He dissuades from the use of “terror and sharp penalties,” which were then “the manner,” and recommends mildness and gentleness—a lesson which their successors have scarcely learned yet.

Carte, a Protestant writer friendly to the church, in his *Life of Ormond*, represents the clergy of the next reign, as “generally ignorant and unlearned, loose and irregular in their lives and conversations, negligent of their cures, and very careless of observing uniformity and decency in divine worship.” Lord Strafford drew the same melancholy picture of the Irish clergy:—“An unlearned clergy, which have not so much as the outward form of churchmen; the churches unbuilt; the parsonage and vicarage houses utterly ruined; the people untaught through the nonresidency of the clergy, occasioned by the unlimited and shameful number of spiritual promotions with cure of souls; \* \* \* the bishops alienating their very principal houses and demesnes to their children and strangers.”\* Wentworth also mentions the singular fact, that the wives and children of several of the clergy were Roman Catholics; “and there,” said he, “the church goes most lamentably to wreck.” Such then was the Protestant interest, that was to be preserved at all hazards by massacres, confiscations, plantations, and Penal Laws.

\* State Letters, vol. I. p. 187, apud Dean Murray.

## CHAPTER V.

## CONFISCATION AND COLONIZATION.

“Hurra, for reoellion!—the conquerors said—  
The prelude to sweet confiscation!  
The more of the national blood we can shed,  
The better for colonization.”

JAMES I. commenced his reign with a general jail delivery for all “except murderers and papists.” He also pronounced an anathema on his successors if they should ever be guilty of toleration; and hastened to contradict a false report, that he intended to grant liberty of conscience in Ireland; assuring his “beloved subjects,” that he would grant no such thing.

A rebellion in the North, provoked by officials, who hungered and thirsted after forfeitures, led to the confiscation of six counties in that province, which was planted chiefly by Presbyterians from Scotland. James found some difficulty in getting the Irish Parliament to sanction this measure; but a stroke of his royal pen settled all. He created fourteen new peers, and erected forty wretched hamlets and villages into boroughs, sending members to parliament. These were the boroughs which carried the Union, represented then, as they were at first, by placemen and creatures of the English government. The prosperity of the Ulster colony may be ascribed to several causes in addition to the free and sturdy spirit of the Presbyterians; the landlords were of the same race and religion with the people, who not only enjoyed sympathy, but a tenant’s right, guaranteed by custom, and almost as valuable in the market as a perpetuity; the original settlement provided for a middle class of proprietors; and this was reinforced by the Linen Trade, which gave employment, circulated money, and ministered to personal independence and domestic comfort. Besides, the province is generally divided into very small farms, and thereby brought under profitable cultivation. These various elements of prosperity should be taken into consideration by those who contrast the North with the South, and throw the blame of all Ireland’s miseries on the Catholic religion.

James, "the wisest fool in Europe," was greatly pleased with his work of plantation, which he was very anxious to extend. But there was a slight difficulty in the way—there was no more land to give away to strangers. Not that he had any scruples about clearing off the Irish proprietors, but he wished an excuse for doing it; and he thought of a plan more plausible and less hazardous than kindling a rebellion. After ages of civil war and anarchy there necessarily existed great confusion and irregularity in the titles to estates. Happy thought! He at once instituted "a commission for the discovery of defective titles." "In consequence a crowd of lawyers, interested in the plunder, by the hope of sharing the booty, pounced upon Ireland like a flock of harpies;" and by their chicanery and ingenuity succeeded so well, that a vast number of estates, amounting to a million of acres of the best land in Ireland, was forfeited to the crown. At the head of this commission was Sir William Parsons, "an unprincipled adventurer on whom craft and crime have conferred an unenviable notoriety."\* He thereby secured his large estates in the King's County, &c.

Wentworth came over to Ireland as Lord Deputy, with the avowed intention of making his master "the most absolute monarch in Christendom." He carried the work of confiscation forward with the unscrupulous vigour peculiar to his character. Parsons had got the million acres divided among Protestants, and his successor in this good work was resolved to adopt the same mode of rooting out "Popery" from Connaught. But it was a very difficult work; for though he sought out "fit men for jurors," and gave the judges four shillings in the pound out of the first year's rent on all the forfeitures, and also had near the court five hundred horsemen "as good lookers on," yet he could not in all cases obtain verdicts. But he was not to be baffled by constitutional forms—the refractory jurors and sheriffs were fined enormously, and imprisoned in dungeons. Some were put in the pillory, and subjected to other infamous punishments such as cutting off their ears, boring their tongues and branding their foreheads with a hot iron. It was thus the soil of Connaught became the King of England's possession, and such was the regard paid to the sacred rights of property by the English authorities in these days. "This just severity," says Strafford, "was expected to make all the succeeding plantations pass with the greatest quietness that could be imagined."

Thus, by one fell swoop, the whole Catholic population, from the lords

\* Dr. Cooke Taylor. Beaumont's Ireland, vol. I. p. 61.



of vast domains to the poorest tenant, were turned out of their homes and patrimonies, reduced by an act of wholesale robbery in a single day to pauperism, and of course rendered desperate by a burning sense of wrong. Some left the country, some drove their cattle into the woods and mountains, and sought a miserable existence where English cupidity and crime could not reach them, while others became robbers by profession—and made reprisals from the settlers that now inhabited their former homes and fertile fields. This iniquity of Charles will appear the greater, when it is recollected that the Catholic proprietors had actually paid him £100,000 for certain “graces,” of which the security of property was one. The king took the money, but Strafford would not allow him to fulfil the promise. The latter had imprisoned one of the sheriffs, concerning whom he writes, “I hope I shall not be refused the life of sheriff Darcy; my arrows are cruel that wound so mortally; but it is necessary that the King should keep his right.” This sheriff, who died of bad treatment in prison, had been fined £1000. The Galway jury had been all arrested, brought prisoners to Dublin, fined each £4000, and required to confess themselves guilty of perjury on their knees.

Consider the state of a whole people, brooding (exiled and homeless) over wrongs like these, and can you imagine anything more natural than that they should seek sympathy and aid in foreign nations, and that they should not hesitate a single moment when the opportunity offered to recover their rights by force, since the government of the country was nothing better than an oligarchy of robbers!

Hated, no doubt they were, as English and as Protestants. For a cry had been raised in England and echoed in Dublin that the Irish Catholics must be extirpated; the alarm excited by this, precipitated the Rebellion of 1641, when O'Neill found himself suddenly at the head of 30,000 soldiers, with the avowed object of recovering Catholic property. Hence the insurgents at first contented themselves with dispossessing and plundering the Protestants; but as the work of violence went on, and encountered resistance and reverses, it became more sanguinary and cruel. It is not fair, therefore, to represent this outbreak, deplorable and dreadful as it was, as a Protestant massacre, like that of St. Bartholomew's in France. It was Protestant in one sense, inasmuch as it was then, unhappily, impossible to separate Protestantism from plunder; but it was essentially a struggle to recover the forfeited property, which would have been equally ferocious if the settlers had been Catholics.\*

Cromwell left the country, and the conduct of the war fell to inferior

\* Cromwell's commissioners represent the number of Protestants who pe-

men, who could not so well restrain the fury of the soldiers. The English forces were at length triumphant. But ten years civil war brought on famine and pestilence, which devoured what the sword had left. Irishmen were now killed in cold blood wherever they were encountered. Extermination was the order of the day. The devoted people were even hunted to their hiding-places, and *smoked* out of the dens and caves, where they lay concealed. Some threw themselves from rocks into the lakes and rivers, and thus terminated their existence. You might travel 20 miles through the country and not see a living creature. Soldiers would tell stories of places where they saw smoke, so rare were the signs of life in the land!

The country was AGAIN CONFISCATED, and the land, measured and divided, was granted to those who had advanced money, on speculation, to support the war. A thousand acres were obtained in Ulster for £200, in Connaught for £300, in Munster for £450, and in Leinster for £600. The natives were all banished to Connaught, or rather to the most barren parts of it, for the conquerors retained a breadth of four miles along the shore of the Atlantic, and of two miles along the rich banks of the Shannon. Thus penned in on every side, the Irish had neither houses to shelter them, nor cattle to stock the land, nor food to eat, nor seed to sow. If any four men assembled together, they were guilty of a capital offence. If a poor Roman Catholic met his beloved pastor, or any other priest on the high way, and did not *inform* against him, he was punished by whipping. When a robbery was committed in a neighbourhood, the peasantry were obliged to restore the value three-fold. Those who passed over the border were shot. Two men did so on one occasion: one of them was slain by the guard, the other was brought before Ludlow. "Have you a mind to be hanged?" asked Cromwell's general. "If you please, sir," was the reply. So intolerable was then the life of an Irishman!

The hanging of priests was a matter of almost daily occurrence; and long after, priest-hunting was a favourite sport in Ireland, and the prey of these mighty hunters were tracked to their retreats by *blood-hounds*—a word which half a century ago thrilled the heart of the Irish peasant with nameless horror. What a fiendish passion is bigotry! What a dreadful scourge is military rule and irresponsible power! How fearful are the natural and necessary results of *uncontrolled* ascendancy!

The good Lord Deputy, Henry Cromwell, came over, and was rished (not in fair fight) throughout Ireland, during the war, at 9000; and Dr. Lingard has proved that in not one of the public despatches of the time, is the outbreak called a "Protestant massacre"—a fact which seems decisive of the question.

amazed at the desolations wrought by his countrymen. He found that they had scarcely left a house standing on the island out of the walled towns. He at once abated the plague of persecution, established just laws, and shielded the people from oppression. He traversed the whole country, examining its resources and planning improvements. He fostered learning, and munificently purchased the library of Archbishop Ussher, out of his own pocket, for the public good. Thus did he win the affections of all the people, with the exception of the soldiers, whose bigotry he repressed. The father's cruelties were forgotten in the humanity, justice, urbanity, and beneficence of the son. Such was his integrity, that after four years spent in the country, he had not money enough to take him to England. *He* acquired no estates by robbery, shared no portion of the national plunder, and made no fortune by corruption. Under his peaceful government, the country, literally a desert, was soon clothed again with golden harvests. Buildings and regular plantations sprang up, and a grateful and loyal people, sat at their firesides in safety. Take the Irish in the right way, and there is nowhere a people more easily governed, or more forgetful of injuries!

Charles II. was restored to the throne of England. In his cause the Irish had sacrificed all. For his sake vast multitudes of the people perished. The nobles had been banished, their estates were confiscated, and what property they could bring with them, they freely imparted to the exiled monarch. He was liberal in promises, that when he returned to power he would reward them richly, or at least give them back their own. But he confirmed the Irish Cromwellians in their newly-acquired property, though they won it in rebelling against his throne! He denounced the friends that fought under his own royal banner as *rebels*, and laughed to scorn their claims upon the forfeited lands!

The church of England was again fully re-established in Ireland, as most favourable to absolute monarchy. Twelve bishops were consecrated with ostentatious pomp, in order to indicate the king's intentions, which were zealously seconded by the Duke of Ormond, who hated the Puritans as much as the Catholics. The religious ardour of the former soon languished in the sunshine of power. Their ill-gotten property was fatal to their piety. Grateful to the king for securing them in the possession of their estates, they quietly conformed to prelacy, as the most suitable religion for a gentleman. Still they were but indifferent episcopalians. The essence of their Protestantism consisted in hatred to Popery, which they regarded as identical with rebellion, and they dreaded that, as involving the loss of the forfeited



lands. The seeds of Irish Protestantism then and thus sown, have borne ample fruits to the present day.

The question of the forfeited estates having been referred to the government in London, deputations went from both sides; but the Protestants prudently took with them £30,000 for judicious distribution, and having sent a similar bribe to Ormond, the decision was given in their favour. However, the Catholics gained something—whereupon a cry of “No Popery” was vehemently raised, and a Protestant conspiracy was got up. It was discovered, and the leaders partially punished. An act was then passed, for ever barring all further investigation into forfeited estates, which the Roman Catholics called the *Black Act*, and the Cromwellians, the Magna Charta of Irish Protestants. The parliament was then dissolved, not to be called again for 27 years. The king increased his own revenue from Ireland, by £80,000 a year, which he squandered on his courtezans and other vile creatures that ministered to his detestable passions. Thus were the Irish rewarded for their *stupid* attachment to the house of Stuart, which the Catholic writer, O'Connor, could account for only by their firm belief in the Divine right of kings—an attachment, says he, “which made Popery and slavery be regarded as synonymous terms.”

The imbecile tyrant, James II., ascended the throne, and too closely imitated the intolerant exclusiveness of his predecessors. He superseded Protestant officers, both civil and military, and replaced them by Catholics. He seized on the seats of learning, and dismissed their Protestant governors and professors in like manner. He had, moreover, the arrogance to use the following words in a proclamation:—

“We, by our Sovereign authority, royal prerogative, and absolute power, do hereby give and grant our royal toleration \* \* \* \* to moderate Presbyterians, to worship in their private houses!” &c. But the “moderate Presbyterians,” fearing that the same grace would be extended to the “Papists,” rejected the boon “as a snare!”

James's *legislation* in Ireland, however, was better than the times. His measures were favourable to liberty, and he ordained that all should pay tithes to *their own pastors*. But nothing could now avert “the glorious Revolution”—glorious for England and for Orangeism, but to Ireland a fresh fountain of calamities!

Ireland, as if destined to be a perpetual battle-field, became now the arena on which two monarchs contended in person for the imperial crown. Previous to their meeting on the banks of the Boyne, Londonderry had won for itself immortal honour by its noble defence against the forces of James. The story of this siege, no matter how simply and artlessly told, is one of the most thrilling in all history.

No lover of liberty can read it without confessing in tears his sympathy with the heroic men who, when maimed by the enemy's cannon, and reduced to skeletons by famine and disease, still uttered with their dying breath the magical watchword—"NO SURRENDER!"

The Protestants had not all the glory of these wars. Athlone was defended by the Irish with valour, obstinacy, and success, equal to what Derry evinced, till the ungrateful king for whom they fought superseded the noble Sarsfield, and placed over his head the French coxcomb, St. Ruth. He withdrew the veteran and triumphant garrison, replaced them with inferior soldiers, and then spent the time in feasting and revelry, while William's forces were storming the town. At Aughrim, the Irish had decidedly the advantage, accounted for by their numbers and position, as well as by their bravery, till the fall of St. Ruth.

It was in vain that breaches were made in the walls of Limerick, and that the most daring of the besiegers rushed forward against the foe. Body after body of volunteers in this desperate assault were cut down to a man; the women, seizing the swords of the fallen, and fighting with fury in defence of their husbands and their children. The English general was about to raise the siege in despair when one Clifford, for a splendid bribe, "sold the pass," and thus the assailants gained by treachery what they could not accomplish by force. Yet the city held out still, and did not capitulate except according to the terms of a most honourable treaty, signed only two days before a French fleet appeared for its relief in the Shannon.

This treaty, we are sorry to say, was nine years after nominally ratified, but virtually and shamefully violated by the English Parliament, as it had been all along practically disregarded by the Irish Protestants.

Thus ended the war. Confiscation followed again, of course! On this occasion were forfeited 1,060,000 acres, belonging to 3,921 persons, *then* worth £3,319,943! The following is from Lord Chancellor Clare's celebrated speech on the Union:—

	ACRES.
"The superficial contents of the island, . . .	11,042,682*
<hr/>	
"Let us now examine the case of the forfeitures:	
Confiscated, in the reign of James I., the whole province of Ulster, . . . . .	2,836,837
Let out by the Court of Claims at the Restoration, . . . . .	7,800,000
Forfeitures of 1688, . . . . .	1,060,629

\* That is, the arable part. The island contains altogether about twenty millions of acres.

“ So that the whole of your island has been confiscated, with the exception of the estates of five or six old families of English blood.

\* \* \* And no inconsiderable portion of the island has been confiscated twice, perhaps thrice. The situation therefore of the Irish nation at the Revolution stands unparalleled in the history of the habitable world. \* \* \* The whole power and property of the country have been conferred by successive monarchs of England upon an English colony, composed of three sets of English adventurers, who poured into this country at the termination of three successive rebellions. Confiscation is their common title ; and from their first settlement they have been hemmed in on every side by the old inhabitants of the island brooding over their discontent in sullen indignation.”

How wretched must have been the condition of this outcast, outlawed, and beggared population ! Many emigrated ; many died of a broken heart and of hunger ; many perished by violence or by law. Others laboured as serfs for their daily bread on the lands of their forefathers. But a great number, too proud to stoop to this, formed themselves into banditti ; and under the names of *Rapparees* and *Tories*, infested the country, living by robbery, and taking shelter in the woods and mountains, where some remnants of them were found lingering for a long time after. This line of life was regarded by the peasantry as the last refuge of patriotism, and those who followed it were concealed and protected by them to the utmost of their power. It was so in England also after the Conquest. Hence the approving sympathy with which they once read such books as *The Irish Rogues and Rapparees ; Freny, the Robber ; Redmond O'Hanlon, &c.*

In the terrible disorganization of those times—when, amidst the ashes of ruined homesteads and burned title-deeds, FORCE, with bloody hoofs trampled down every notion of right and justice—we may discover the source of that popular sympathy with the victims of the law which operates so mischievously at the present day. This would have been the case for a long time even if the administration of justice had not been confined to the hands of the conquerors, or if it had been dealt out equally to the Protestant and the Catholic, the rich and the poor.\*

\* Sir William Petty calculates that more than half a million Irish perished by the sword, pestilence, famine, &c., between 1641 and 1652.



## CHAPTER VI.

## THE PENAL CODE.

“By a certain class of statesmen and by all men of harsh and violent disposition, measures of conciliation, adherence to the spirit of treaties, regard to ancient privileges, or to those rules of moral justice which are paramount to all positive right, are always treated with derision. *Terror* is their only specific, and the physical inability to rebel, their only security for allegiance.”—HALLAM.

THE seventeenth century was one of rebellion and confiscation, with the usual train of horrors—famine, plague, and desolation. The eighteenth century was the era of persecution, in which law did the work of the sword more effectually and safely. Then was established a code, framed with almost diabolical ingenuity, to extinguish natural affection, to foster perfidy and hypocrisy, to petrify conscience, to perpetuate brutal ignorance, to facilitate the work of tyranny by rendering the vices of slavery inherent and natural in the Irish character, and to make Protestantism almost irredeemably odious as the monstrous incarnation of all moral perversions. Too well did it accomplish its deadly work of debasement on the intellects, morals, and physical condition of a people, sinking in degeneracy from age to age, till all manly spirit—all virtuous sense of personal independence and responsibility—was nearly extinct; and the very features, vacant, timid, cunning, and unreflective, betrayed the crouching slave within.

Having no rights or franchises, no legal protection of life or property, disqualified to handle a gun even as a common soldier or a game-keeper, forbidden to acquire the elements of knowledge at home or abroad, forbidden even to render to God what conscience dictated as His due—what could the Irish be but abject serfs? What nation in their circumstances could have been otherwise? Is it not amazing that any social virtue could have survived such an ordeal?—that any seeds of good, any roots of national greatness could have outlived such a long, tempestuous winter?

To keep up this state of things, the Protestants lived in perpetual terror. And, in return for English military protection, the Irish Parliament gave up their trade, the purblind monopoly of that day de-

manding the sacrifice, by which 42,000 families, chiefly Protestant, were suddenly thrown out of employment.

The Roman Catholics were recognized only as the enemies of the state. The tone of their rulers encouraged the cruel, and avaricious, and unprincipled among Protestants, to indulge in every excess. "The whole people," says Dr. Smiles, "were like plants whose roots are in the air. They had no hold on the soil. They were landless, and lay naked and exposed on the surface of the earth, a nation of beggars." The state of Irish society towards the close of the last century may be inferred from a single case. Lord Doneraile horse-whipped a venerable old priest at his own cottage door. The aged pastor ventured to take an action against the noble lord; but no man at the Munster bar would take his brief against so powerful a personage, till Curran volunteered his services.\* When another priest ventured, for the first time after the relaxation of the penal code, to walk out on the public street, he held down his head like a conscious felon, as if he were still stealing a little liberty.

The penal code during one hundred years produced only about 4,000 converts; and so little satisfied was the government with their sincerity, and so distrustful of its own "carnal weapons," that a law was enacted to the effect that no convert should hold any office till he was seven years a Protestant, producing a certificate that he received the sacrament regularly all that time. Many of them died professing the faith of Rome, which gave rise to the Orange proverb—"Once a Papist, a Papist for ever," as if there never had been any converts except those of their own making; and as if Luther, Calvin, and Knox had died in the arms of the Pope! Burke, in his letter to Lord Kenmare, speaks of a race of Irish bigots, not quite extinct even in our own day, "who never saw a man (by converting) escape out of their power but with grudging and regret;" and "who would have become Papists in order to oppress Protestants, if, being Protestants, it were not in their power to oppress Papists."

That great man, who has had so few equals, and, perhaps, no superior, among orators and statesmen, has stated that when he was in Ireland, he had sufficient means of information regarding the ordinary proceedings of those who executed the penal laws—"inhuman proceedings," he calls them, "among which were *many cruel murders*, besides an *infinity of outrages and oppressions*, unknown before in a civilized age," all in consequence of "a pretended conspiracy among Roman Catholics." The denial of educa-

\* Life of Curran, by a Barrister, Duffy's Irish Library, No. II. p. xxi.

tion he calls "part of a horrible and impious system of servitude." And he adds: to render men patient under the deprivation of all the rights of human nature, everything that could give them a knowledge or feeling of those rights was rationally forbidden. "To render humanity fit to be insulted, it was fit that it should be degraded." Therefore he calls the penal code "a truly barbarous system, where almost all the parts were outrages on the rights of humanity, and the laws of nature;" by which the Irish people were "under an irreversible outlawry from our constitution, as perpetual and unalliable aliens;" obliged to wear at the same time a "stigma of reproach and a hideous mask." He describes it as "a complete system—a machine of wise and elaborate contrivance; and as well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment, and degradation of a people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man;" "the declared object" of which was "to reduce the Catholics of Ireland to a miserable populace, without property, without estimation, without education."

He declares that the Protestants of Ireland, after the Revolution, considered themselves as nothing but "a sort of *colonial garrison* to keep the natives in subjection to the other state of Great Britain. \* \* What was done was not in the spirit of a contest between two religious factions, but between two adverse nations. Unheard of confiscations were made in the northern parts upon grounds of plots and conspiracies, *never proved* upon their supposed authors. The war of chicane succeeded to the war of arms and of hostile statutes, \* \* \* until this species of subtle ravage, being carried to the last excess of oppression and insolence under Lord Strafford, it kindled the flames of that rebellion which broke out in 1641. \* \* \* All the penal laws of that unparalleled code of oppression, which were made after the last event, were manifestly the effect of national hatred and scorn towards a conquered people, whom the victors delighted to trample upon and were not at all afraid to provoke." Why not afraid? Because they "looked to the irresistible force of Great Britain for their support in these acts of power. They were quite certain that no complaints of the natives would be heard on this side of the water with any other sentiments than those of contempt and indignation. Their cries served only to augment their torture. \* \* \* Every measure was pleasing and popular, just in proportion as it tended to harass and ruin a set of people who were looked upon as enemies to God and man, and indeed as a race of bigoted savages who were a disgrace to human nature itself."\*

\* Burke's letter to Sir Hercules Langrish.



It needs but a little reflection to convince us that the principal faults of the Irish character, and all the anomalies of their social condition have arisen naturally out of the equally absurd and cruel policy of England. For instance, the Irish peasantry have been charged with a propensity to falsehood. But has not this propensity been the vice of all oppressed people in every land, from the children of Israel in Egypt down to the slavish population of India, or the poor Negroes in America? Does it not often furnish the only means of evading the sudden fury of passionate tyranny, and saving the innocent from ruin? What is more natural to the weak than to try to baffle violent physical force by ingenious fraud; or to suspect an enemy in every one whose garb bespeaks his connexion with the ruling class, especially in a country like Ireland, where everything deemed patriotic, virtuous or sacred, could exist for centuries only by concealment from the vengeance of the law?

The same remark applies to the courts of justice, where, in many cases, the witness sets himself determinately against letting out the truth. There is scarcely any criminal so friendless in Ireland as not to be able to get some compassionate neighbour to prove an *alibi*, let his guilt be ever so palpable. This is a great evil; but so long as the law is regarded in the light of an engine of oppression by which a hostile race and an alien church have worked their dominant will against the masses of the people, what else can you expect but the perversion of moral feeling—*quoad* their enemies above mentioned? For to one another the Irish are candid, confiding and truthful!

These laws were aimed not at the religion of the Catholic only, but still more at his liberty and his property. He was not eligible to sit in parliament; he could not vote at elections; he could hold no commission in the army or navy, nor any office under the crown; and every liberal profession was closed against him but that of medicine; he could enjoy no freehold property, nor was he allowed to have a lease for a longer term than thirty-one years: but as even this term was long enough to encourage an industrious man to reclaim waste lands and improve his worldly circumstances, it was enacted that if a Papist should have a farm producing a profit greater than one-third of the rent, his right to such should immediately cease, and pass over to the first Protestant who should discover the rate of profit. It was thus that the fostering government in England encouraged agricultural improvement in those days! And yet ignorant Englishmen have presumed to talk flippantly of the slovenly farming of the Irish, and the absence among them of domestic comfort and a provident regard to the future. Why, if a man were seen with a decent coat

on his back, or a good dinner on his table, or if he built a neat house, the Protestant discoverer, who lurked about watching for his prey, would be furnished with the coveted proof that his neighbour was getting too well off for a Papist, and therefore should resign his property to one whose religion entitled him to be respectable.\* In like manner if he were detected with a horse worth more than five pounds he should at once give him up to the discoverer for that sum, except he were merely breeding good animals for his betters. If he were guilty of concealing a sprightly horse he was subject to a penalty. It was by such means the law taught the Irish Catholic civilization, and taught the Protestant to love his neighbour as himself!

This same paternal law—this gift of “the glorious Revolution”—shut out all Catholics from the corporations, and subjected them to heavy tolls from which Protestants were free. They were mere common labourers or journeymen; and to make them feel the iron of this tyranny enter the soul, they were compelled under severe penalties to work on holidays. If the country was disturbed, or if the “state of the country” alarmists of those days, got up an apprehension of danger, popish horses were seized for the Protestant militia then called out, which militia was supported solely by “the Papists of the county.” “Thus Catholic property was incessantly charged with the most iniquitous and arbitrary taxes. It was taxed for the necessity of the state by a Protestant parliament; for the necessities of the county by a Protestant grand-jury; for the necessities of the parish by a Protestant vestry; for the necessities of the town by a Protestant corporation. What security could Catholic property have when thus exposed and thus menaced?”†

All these iniquities were sustained by a most vicious popular opinion, both in England and Ireland. When the aged and venerable Plunket, the Catholic Archbishop of Armagh, one of the victims of the pretended Popish plot, was condemned to death, Essex, who had been viceroy of Ireland, solicited his pardon from Charles II., declaring that the charges were, to his own knowledge, utterly unfounded. “Well, my lord,” said the king, “his blood be upon your conscience; you could have saved him if you pleased; I cannot pardon him, because I dare not.” In like manner, in 1771, the Lord Lieutenant was on the point of pardoning a Catholic unjustly condemned; but

\* The penal code was *relaxed* by giving a long lease for a certain quantity of bog with *only* half an acre of arable ground for a house; the lease to be forfeited if the bog was not reclaimed in twenty years.—L. C. REPORT.

† Beaumont's Ireland, vol. 1, p. 129.

seeing to what *unpopularity* this act of justice would expose him, he said, "I see that his death is resolved; let him die." Accordingly the warrant for his execution was issued.\*

Can it be supposed that a proud, pampered minority, monopolizing all power and honour in the state, inflamed at once by bigotry and intemperance, could have a hated nation and an execrated church, thus in the dust under their feet, and not carry their excesses even beyond the limits of the law, although it allowed such a latitude for tyranny and spoliation?

Such was the condition of Irishmen when O'Connell was born! In a social point of view it had been but little ameliorated when he founded the Catholic Association. How vast the change wrought by thirty years of agitation! Slow and difficult is the work of mental emancipation. How hard to bring back the soul of freedom to a nation—to reanimate a people "brayed as it were in a mortar!" Yet such is the achievement of the Irish Liberator, one of the most glorious in the history of the world! He has converted a slave population into a nation of freemen—intelligent, temperate, organized, determined, self-reliant, peaceful and valiant. This great revolution he has accomplished, without sacrificing a single human life, his sole weapons being an eloquent tongue, a ready pen, and an indomitable will. Therefore his work will stand, and posterity will bless his name. The Napoleons and Wellingtons of the world—the destroyers of nations—may require monuments of stone to perpetuate their memories. O'Connell's monument is a NATION; whose life of freedom was the breath of his mouth—taught to wage a war in which defeat is impossible, while its forces are justice and truth. Surely it must be to fulfil some noble destiny—to make for herself a distinct and glorious history—to play some great independent part, and to exert some mighty influence among the nations, that Ireland has been raised by Divine Providence to her present altitude of moral power—contrasting so wonderfully with her vile condition, her unutterable degradation for a hundred years of slavery, succeeding six hundred years of civil war! What has she *now* to fear? Is there any evil demon that can paralyze her power, confound her policy, infatuate and destroy? Alas! there is; unless by great vigilance and self-denial she guard against its influence: it is her old enemy, *religious intolerance*.

\* Plowden, vol. 1, p. 414.



## CHAPTER VII.

## THE IRISH PARLIAMENT.

“ It was not English ARMS, but the English CONSTITUTION that conquered Ireland.”—EDMUND BURKE.

How melancholy was the condition into which Europe was thrown by the successive invasions and constant tyranny of the northern barbarians! Though society began to emerge from the chaos in the twelfth century, and to unfold the germs of future civilization, the portion of the same lawless race who then invaded Ireland had partaken very little of the insipient refinement, as they had continued to lead in England and Wales a piratic and tumultuous life, unfriendly to all improvement except in the arts of war. It is true that Ireland herself could never boast of anything like our modern civilization. Her's was of an oriental stamp, unlike the material and artificial type which now prevails. 'Tis true that repeated inundations of Danish barbarism had caused the national manners to suffer a marked deterioration, and that the country was afflicted with its share of the anarchy of the times; but certainly not nearly to the extent in which some other nations suffered.

And yet nothing is more common than to harp on the disorganized state of Irish society as justifying the invasion and wholesale murders and spoliation of the Anglo-Normans! We admit that dissensions, and party spirit, and resistance to law have cursed Ireland for a much longer time than other lands; and no wonder, since England has made it her business to keep stirring up the coals of internal strife, and blowing the bellows of faction.

The laws made by the chiefs and people on consecrated hills, or in the great national congress at Tara, were observed with a fidelity of which there is no other example in Europe. What if her institutions did not display a knowledge of the science of government, or the maxims of political economy? These things were as little thought of then as the steam engine. Her government, being a national fabric, it withstood many a shock before the English conquest; and even this could not, by the military operations of four hundred years, cast it

down from its broad foundations, till those foundations themselves were gradually sapped away by famine and pestilence, designedly produced by a mode of warfare as savage as any recorded in history. To eradicate Irish customs it was found necessary to extirpate the Irish people.

But had Ireland been left to manage her own affairs, there is little room for doubt that she would at least have kept pace with other nations, when the era of renovation and civilization arrived, though her isolation from the great thoroughfares of the world was against her. She, too, would have borrowed or invented a constitution, and organized a parliament to represent the people and check the power of her chiefs. Nay, she would have taken the boon from the English colony if they had been willing to grant it even for money.

They were a military people, the free proprietors of the soil they had won by their swords; and as they were led generally by chiefs of noble blood, their government was, at first, of necessity, feudal, but it gradually became constitutional, for whatever rights were conceded to the people of England were enjoyed by them also. Among these were a free and independent parliament,\* and Magna Charta.

In 1217 she received Magna Charta in the fulness of its privileges, which were afterwards twice confirmed. In 1253 the Queen Regent appealed to the Irish Parliament, including "freemen, citizens, and burgesses," for a grant of money to sustain a war on the continent.

"In the reign of Edward II.," says Mr. John O'Connell, M. P., "several of the most important of the acts at that time passed in the British Parliament were confirmed and adopted by acts of the Irish Parliament, and others referred for examination and consideration. It was then declared that only such of them as should be allowed and published were to stand as laws in Ireland; and an Irish act of 10th Henry IV., followed by one in the 29th year of Henry VI., expressly provided that no English law should have force unless adopted, allowed, and published by the Irish Parliament."

During the Commonwealth Ireland was represented in the British Parliament by thirty members. But as this revolutionary interregnum is counted as a blank in the constitutional history of England, this precedent cannot be fairly pleaded against Irish nationality. Besides, "this sending of representatives out of Ireland was found in

\* According to Hallam, the first indisputable instance of *regular county* representation in England occurred in 1265, the 49th year of Henry III.—Vol. 2, p. 168, 8th edit. The great charter had been granted February 7, 1217, by the Regent.—Rym. 1, 166.

process of time to be very troublesome and inconvenient; and this, we presume, was the reason that afterwards, when times were more settled, we fell again into our old track and regular course of parliaments in our own country.”\*

While perusing our parliamentary history it must be borne in mind that for centuries there were two nations in this island: the native Irish with their ancient independence, maintained through every storm with desperate tenacity; and the Anglo-Irish, with institutions exclusive as regarded the natives, but otherwise free and progressive. It is singular enough that the Reformation, followed as it was by complete conquest, was made instrumental in levelling this wall of separation, and making all the inhabitants of Ireland, theoretically, at least, one nation. Native blood was no longer a ground of exclusion from constitutional rights. It was not the Irish race but the Catholic conscience that was now assailed by English power. Even the penal code proceeded, for the most part, on the supposition that the constitution belonged to all Irishmen. Certain oaths were imposed on all who should enjoy its privileges, which oaths it was well known Catholics would not take. Why? “Because,” said the Protestants, “they yield allegiance to a foreign power, and are therefore disaffected and rebellious: it is right to keep them down.” “No,” said the Catholics, “but because these oaths are contrary to our religion and our conscience; and if we took them we should be traitors to our God and base in the eyes of men.”

This plea was not allowed; and accordingly they were regarded as non-existent in the body politic, “under the state,” but not of it—a nation of helots. But the moment the Irish people became Protestant they could, every man, enter the portals of the constitution. There were, indeed “lucid intervals,” between the wild, protracted paroxysms of furious bigotry, during which the Catholic people did enjoy their rights, voting at elections and sitting in parliament. But when the penal laws settled down into a deadly system—an iron framework of “vicious perfection”—like the prison in the romance, so constituted by an ingenious tyrant as to close in upon its victim slowly and steadily, threatening to crush him infallibly at last, and making him die a thousand deaths in anticipation of his dreadful doom—then

\* Molyneux p. 60, ed. 1773. See “An Argument for Ireland by John O’Connell, Esq., M. P.” a most valuable work, displaying extraordinary industry, and a sound judgment; as an *argument* its conclusions are as logical and just as its premises are unquestionable.



indeed the people were deprived of all political rights, but not as Irishmen.

Meantime the minority, privileged, favoured, armed and unrestrained as they were, exercised a dangerous power. They trampled on the body of a giant, exhausted but not dead. They had put out his eyes, and shorn off his "invincible locks," yet those locks were growing unobserved, and at intervals he stirred his chained limbs, and put forth his slumbering power in spasmodic efforts, destructive and terrific. Roused at length, he rose and carried off the gates of his prison, and was with difficulty disabled and manacled once more, when he had his arms round the very pillars of the constitution. He was then blind, and bound, partly because he had yielded to the fascination of his Delilah, intemperance; but now how changed! Now he has taken the vow of the Nazarite.

The chief plea for this treatment of the Irish nation was what Edmund Burke called "a commodious bugbear"—dread of the pope, whose very name frightened England from her propriety, and drove Protestants into courses which too often brought the interests of religion into collision with those of humanity. It is a consolation, however, to know that slavery cannot long exist by the side of liberty, especially when the rights of men are vindicated in presence of the public press; nor can tyranny rest secure where any portion of the people are entrusted with a constitution.

Accordingly we find England, for a series of ages, bending all her resources to corrupt the Irish parliament, and neutralize its power—the best possible proof of its value as the Sanctuary of Irish freedom! We must, therefore, sorrowfully confess that it was often used, or abused by our rulers to give the forms of law to wrong and oppression, and that its power was invoked by the Sovereign as seldom as possible, except to do mischief. "For what end," asks Sir John Davies, "was the parliament holden by Lord Leonard Gray, in the 28th Henry III., but to attain the Geraldines, and to abolish the usurped authority of the pope? To what purpose did Thomas Earl of Sussex hold his first parliament in the 3rd and 4th of King William and Queen Mary, but to settle Leix and O'Falley on the Crown? What was the principal cause that Sir Henry Sydney held a parliament in the 11th year of Queen Elizabeth, but to extinguish the name of O'Neill, and to entitle the Crown to the greatest part of Ulster? And, lastly, what was the chief motive of the last parliament holden by Sir John Perrot, but the attainders of two great peers of this realm, the Viscount Baltinglass, and the Earl of Desmond. and for vesting their lands and

the lands of their adherents in the actual possession of the Crown?"\*

When the altered spirit of the times forbade violence and force, and demanded that some regard should be paid to form, the subserviency of the Irish parliament was sought to be effected by an enormous system of bribery. The agent by whom the English government practised this disgraceful immorality, was the Viceroy, who resided in London, and negotiated with the Irish "*undertakers*"—certain influential lords, who, by means of two hundred rotten boroughs, and still more rotten corporations, could manage the parliament, and always command a majority on an emergency for a stipulated *consideration*. This consideration consisted of peerages, pensions, and patronage. It was thus, as Grattan happily expressed it, "The ministers sold the prerogatives of the Crown to buy the privileges of the people."

When the aristocrats of England divided the spoils of office among themselves, they generally gave the government of Ireland to some imbecile brother, whose parliamentary influence forbid that he should be slighted; or to some peer impoverished by his vices, that he might be enabled by its emoluments, to get out of his difficulties. It was a profitable concern. In two years, Lord Wharton is said to have realised £45,000. "Infamous pensions to infamous men"—as Grattan called them—became an enormous tax on the people. In 1756, they amounted to £44,000; but, in 1793, from the strenuous efforts then made to undo the work of independence, and divide the national party, they amounted to £120,000. When the regular pension fund was exhausted, they drew on the Treasury. Hence, few Viceroys threw up the reins of government, without leaving an arrear of from £200,000 to £300,000.

While this vile work was carried on by the Lords Justices, and other undertakers, the Lord Lieutenant was occupied with his pleasures in London, merely hurrying over to open parliament, and returning back as soon as possible. Of twenty Viceroys that succeeded one another during a century, Lord Townshend was the only one who resided in this country. He came with the honourable intention of getting rid of the undertakers, and the tribe of intriguers that infested the castle. But the agents and beneficiaries of corruption were too able for him, owing to their local knowledge, their combination, and their ready tact in the arts of temptation. Hence, his unsuspecting honesty cost

\* Davies', p. 300.

the country more than their practised roguery, and he left the Treasury £265,000 in debt.

But there is a limit beyond which corruption cannot be carried ; and there are occasions when its subjects will try to compensate in one direction for their purchased dereliction of duty in another ; or consulting a galled conscience, or a corroding sense of honour within, they will resent their iniquitous bonds, and, it may be, act the patriot with impassioned zeal. Such conduct an unprincipled government would not dare to punish openly, lest it should provoke greater defection, or draw out more damning disclosures. Besides a reform in parliament would have dried up the fountains of this evil—an event which would have come in due course of time, as the result of an extension of the suffrage, if the French Revolution, and the Irish Rebellion, with their bloody horrors, had not given government the wished-for opportunity of utterly destroying a body, which, depraved as they had made it, earned the wages of prostitution so reluctantly. It was a system of monstrous wickedness!—a foul conspiracy against the liberties of a people, whose poverty was taxed to pay the very wretches who betrayed and sold them ! But who was the insidious tempter—the unscrupulous corruptor—the reckless agent of this moral and political perdition ? Alas ! it was the responsible government of a great, mighty, and religious nation.

With such designs against Ireland, it was certainly politic in Britain, to destroy her parliament. Bad as it was—greatly as it needed reform—yet, was it of incalculable advantage to the nation, as the constitutional engine of its power—the platform of liberty, whence its voice might be heard throughout the world proclaiming her wrongs, asserting her rights, and conducting the lightning of popular opinion, with scathing vengeance, to the brow of conscious and trembling tyranny !

Thus the rights of the Irish Parliament were acknowledged by the English government, at the very time when truth and integrity were sacrificed in perverting its power to wicked purposes ; if not, why did they not proceed directly to their object, by acts of their own legislation ? They did this on some occasions, but such conduct was resented as a palpable outrage on the Irish constitution. English power, in such cases, bore down on the nation tyrannically ; but, her spirit, though bent, was not broken. “Whatever may be the pressure upon a conquered people, there will come a moment of their recoil. Providence reserves to itself various means by which the bonds of the oppressor may be broken ; and it is not for human sagacity to antici-



pate, whether the army of a conquerer shall moulder in the unwholesome marshes of Rome, or stiffen with frost in a Russian winter.”\*

In the Irish Parliament, under James II., in 1689, which represented the bulk of the nation, including all such Protestants and even spiritual peers as chose to retain their allegiance, it was declared that Ireland was “a distinct kingdom, always governed by his Majesty and his predecessors, according to the ancient customs, laws, and statutes thereof, and that the parliament of Ireland *alone* could make laws to bind this kingdom.” The same principle of nationality was emphatically asserted in 1641, by a parliament composed almost equally of Protestants and Catholics. On the 26th of July, in that year, they resolved as follows:—“It is voted upon the question *nullo contradicente*, that the subjects of his majesty’s kingdom are a free people, and to be governed only according to the common law of England, and the *statutes* made and established by parliament, in this kingdom of Ireland, and according to the lawful customs used in the same.†

The *common law* of England was always admitted as a part of the constitution extended to Ireland, and English acts declarative of that law were in force here without re-enactment; but no *statute* was allowed till adopted and published by the Irish legislature. James’s parliament, in the act already referred to, asserting Irish independence, repealed *Poyning’s law*, so celebrated in the struggles of this country for her constitutional rights. This law, which was passed in the reign of Henry VII., provided that all bills should be submitted to the king in his English council, before they could be introduced into the parliament of this kingdom.

Subsequent acts occasionally suspended or enforced Poyning’s law, until the 3rd and 4th of Philip and Mary, which “*explained*” by rendering more stringent its provisions. Thus the right of the king in his English council to *alter* acts transmitted from Ireland, was established not to be again questioned.‡ The bills so altered came back unalterable, and there was nothing for it but to accept them or reject them just as they were.

Although thus “cabbined, cribbed, confined,” the Irish Parliament had in it a principle of vitality, and on certain occasions it struggled gallantly for freedom. In 1690, the commons rejected a money bill, because it had not originated in their house. In 1703, the Irish lords

\* Hallam.

† Commons’ Journals, July, 1641.

‡ *An Argument for Ireland.*

had so much self-respect as to resist with spirit and success, an arrogant attempt of the English upper house to interfere with their judicial authority. An altered money bill sent over from England, was thrown out by the commons in 1709. In 1719, the Irish lords had again to withstand the grasping ambition of the English legislature, which presumed to overrule their jurisdiction. Their remonstrance on that occasion was treated with the utmost contempt. England, annoyed and irritated by these repeated efforts to hold fast their liberties, was determined to give legislative effect to her spirit of domination, and to make her chains as palpable as they were painful. Accordingly, in a law for "the better securing the *dependency* of Ireland upon the Crown of *Great Britain*," it was enacted that "the king's majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and the commons of Great Britain in parliament assembled, had, hath, *and of right ought to have*, full power and authority, to make laws and statutes of sufficient force to bind the kingdom and people of Ireland." 6 Geo. I.

This act of unmasked tyranny would have been sufficient to justify a revolution; and had Ireland then the spirit which America subsequently displayed in resisting a similar claim, to make laws and impose taxes without the consent of the people, she would have cut the cable that bound her to England, and thrown off the yoke for ever. As, according to the very elements of constitutional laws, the name of commons implied a right to withhold the supplies, if a redress of grievances were refused, and as the time had not yet come for robbing the nation of its parliament, the notable expedient was adopted to persuade the commons to grant the supplies for 21 years! This, of course, was resisted; and in 1751, they asserted their right to dispose of the surplus revenue then in the Irish Exchequer. It is a rare thing for a corporate body to relinquish any of its immunities so long as it is possible to retain them; and yet the Irish Parliament had the magnanimity in 1767, to limit its own duration to seven years, though before that the members had a right to sit for life, unless when the death of the Sovereign called for a new election. The English government was so vexed at this deference to the wishes of the people, tending, as it did, to render the task of corruption more difficult, that they altered the term from seven to eight years, hoping that the affront studiously conveyed in this capricious exercise of an unjust prerogative, might lead to the indignant rejection of the bill. But the parliament had the good sense and firmness to accept the reform and pass by the insult.

What a pity that England has not acted a more generous part towards the "sister-island!" Why has she been exacting in proportion

as her partner was needy, ever ready to extort the most humiliating concessions in the hour of her weakness? Because, as Flood once said, "it is the principle of *power*, which no nation ever relinquished while she could maintain it." A *master*-nation will inevitably oppress. The law of self-interest, which leads to this, is as infallible in its operation as the law of gravitation. Any other kingdom in Europe would, if placed in England's circumstances, be equally tyrannical; some, perhaps, more so. A hereditary enemy, hardly conquered and cruelly wronged, with tastes, and habits, and a temperament so different, Ireland never can be one with England. Nor, indeed, will England ever suffer any nation to be thoroughly incorporated with herself, except by perfect assimilation. She is too proud, too unsympathising, too self-willed, egotistic and intolerant; too intensely national and insular, for amalgamation with any foreign people. She, even through her present Prime Minister, pleads a law of nature in favour of her subjugating or extirpating dominion, and presumes to say that, destiny is the hand-maid of British power. She reads the coming perdition of every race, but the Saxon, in the lineaments of their face, the colour of their skin, or the outlines of their skull; and fondly deems that the Almighty has selected her as his destroying angel, to pour out the vials of his wrath on the nations of the earth. And, yet, she carries round the globe, the Gospel, which is to be preached to every creature—which declares that God hath made all men of "one blood," which produces among them peace and good will, and which is designed to gather all the kindreds and tribes of mankind into one holy and happy brotherhood! Strange contradiction.

The whole history of the English policy in Ireland proves not only the absence of affection, but the existence of a deep repugnance, amounting almost to antipathy to the Irish character. She can be just anywhere but here. Hence, the rage with which she has precipitated herself on this country, whenever she got an excuse for coercion acts, and martial law; and hence, all the invidious and mortifying distinctions and exceptions in her legislation—all the distrust and partiality in her executive. Nor, is it among her rulers and the ignorant masses alone, that this unhappy disposition is manifest. Her historians and public writers—the most enlightened and elevated spirits in the land, labour under the same infirmity.\* Something like respect they can show to other nations, but none to Ireland. If we

\* I know a most respectable historian and divine, otherwise one of the most liberal men in England, who has declared, that he experiences an indescribable sensation, whenever a letter comes to him with the Irish post mark.



are submissive, we are despised ; if discontented, united and agitated, we are feared and hated. By loyalty and tranquillity we never gained anything. It is only when agitation is too skilful for coercion, and anticipated rebellion is likely to issue in revolution, that, in a panic, justice is done, and rights are conceded ; but, to be counterworked by a cunning policy, when the storm has blown over—this is the dangerous lesson too well taught us by British rule. There is no maxim better founded in truth, or more deeply engraven on the Irish heart, than, that “England’s extremity is Ireland’s opportunity.”

The contest with the American colonies was what Wellington would call a little war. Lafayette said, it was “a war of patrols,” and yet, it decided the destinies of the world. If you inquire, says an eloquent French writer, “why small events are really so great, why this war of skirmishes should decide the fate of nations, you can find no other reason than the principle on which the war was grounded. That principle was just and legal resistance against tyranny and oppression. It was the idea, not the fact, that troubled the world. Attila, passed over the nations like a hurricane over the ocean. The tempest passed by—it was cursed and forgotten. But a petty people revolted ; scarcely had blood flowed, though at the distance of 2000 leagues from us, when, though we had nothing to fear from the agitation, we were profoundly troubled by it. The fact was the smallest possible ; but the principle was immense.”\*

God forbid that blood should ever flow in the war of Irish nationality ! But, if it do, it will not be a small but “a great fact.” We know what sensations it would awaken in Europe, and how profoundly it would trouble the repose of the world ! However, the American cause was just ; it was clearly stated, and triumphantly vindicated in the noblest eloquence, which thrilled along the electric wires of the press, through every land. It sounded like the resurrection trumpet in the ears of dead nations. The doctrine of passive obedience, and the divine right of kings, was cast off from the popular mind like “the slough of a slavish superstition.” The social contract was examined, and monarchs were found to have duties as well as rights, and that, failing the duties, the rights lost all their sanctity. England, relying on her armies, broke faith with her colonies, superseded their parliaments, and dared to tax them without their consent. In one sense, they were a petty people ; but, in another, they were truly great, inheriting a noble spirit from their persecuted ancestors. It was meet that in the land of “the pilgrim fathers”—the land in whose wilder-

\* Mr. Beaumont.

nesses "they found freedom to worship God," denied them on the Christian soil of Britain; it was meet that the worthy descendants of these illustrious confessors of freedom, should be the first to teach Britain and the world, that there *is* a remedy against the mightiest tyranny; that stout hearts and strong hands, firmly banded in UNION and guided by wisdom, can, under a smiling Providence, glorify lawful rebellion by success, clouded by no infamous disaster, and shedding an inspiring light down on the remotest posterity!

The effect of the American Revolution on Ireland was electrical. "A voice from America," exclaimed Flood, "shouted liberty!" and every hill and valley of this rejoicing Island, echoed "liberty!" Why should *this* people—not a colony, but a nation, not enfranchised yesterday, but "free-born"—why should *they* submit to laws and taxes made and imposed by a British parliament? "England," said an English Master of the Rolls, in 1774, has as good a right to tax Ireland as the colonies." "Yes," replied an opposition member, "and the colonies are in revolt, precisely because you have taxed them." Freedom then found, as she has ever done, in the British senate some of her most illustrious prophets. Burke, Fox, and Sheridan, there expounded and proclaimed her mighty principles, adding the fervour of her inspiration to the authority of truth. A galaxy no less glorious, dispelled the gloom and thrilled the apathy of Ireland. The parliament in College-Green, responded to the appeals of her orators; and hearing outside of their own doors, the clanking of political chains on their Catholic fellow-subjects, they became ashamed of the monstrous anomaly, and struck off a few of the most galling links.

The American Revolution involved England in war with France, Spain, and Holland. All her soldiers were drafted away from Ireland, the Treasury was exhausted, and the country was threatened with invasion. The people of Belfast appealed to the government for protection, and received for reply, that they must protect themselves as well as they could, as government had at its disposal, only half a troop of dismounted cavalry.

Animated by patriotism and nationality, a volunteer militia started up all over the land, self-armed, self-organized, self-sustained, choosing its own commanders, and maintaining a perfect independence of government in all its proceedings. At the outset they were furnished with 16,000 swords and muskets from the Castle; and they applied themselves with zeal to military discipline, that they might be able to repel invasion whenever it came. Their Commander-in-Chief was Lord Charlemont; their generals were chosen from the noblest in the land

without distinction of party. This great army, *democratically* constituted and supported on the *voluntary* principle, consisted chiefly of Protestants, and one of its most ardent leaders was the famous Earl of Bristol, Bishop of Derry, who lavished his vast wealth in getting up splendid demonstrations and giving *eclat* to the patriotic cause. Had his counsels prevailed instead of those of the prudent Lord Charlemont, who thought more of feudal privilege than philosophic equality, it is probable that Ireland would have followed the example of America.

The numbers of armed volunteers stood as follows :—

Ulster,	. . . . .	34,152
Munster,	. . . . .	18,056
Connaught,	. . . . .	14,336
Leinster,	. . . . .	22,283
Total,		<hr/> 88,827

Twenty-two corps also acceded, but made no return, estimated at 12,000, making in all, nearly a grand total of 100,000 fighting men, armed and ready for the field, having at their disposal 130 pieces of artillery. The moral effect on the country was amazing. Never did Ireland experience such harmony, such prosperity, such peace, nor could her most sanguine children have believed them possible. Trade flourished in all directions, feuds were forgotten, and the laws were religiously obeyed. Crime and outrage ceased as if by miracle. Though the people “had the constitution in their arms,” they were determined to obtain their rights, if possible, without force. Hence they applied themselves to political discussions. Free trade and parliamentary INDEPENDENCE was their emphatic demand. Never were liberty and loyalty more happily combined.

The position of the Irish nation during this brief era of its glory, reminds us of the famous *Sigillum Unionis Aragonum*. The engraving “represents the king sitting on his throne, with the confederates kneeling in a suppliant attitude around, to denote their loyalty and unwillingness to offend. But in the back ground, tents and lines of spears are discovered, as a hint of their ability and resolution to defend themselves. This respectful demeanour towards a sovereign, against whom they were waging war, reminds us of the language held out by our long parliament before the Presbyterian party was overthrown. And, although it has been lightly censured as inconsistent and hypocritical, this tone is the safest that men can adopt, who, deeming themselves under a necessity of withstanding the reigning



monarch, are anxious to avoid a change of dynasty or subversion of their constitution.”\*

The same philosophical historian speaks of the “degradation of a national character which proceeds from entrusting the public defence to foreigners.” Of course there must be something ennobling in the citizens taking that task upon themselves. Accordingly we may apply to the volunteers his remark on another occasion, for never was it more appropriate :—They “preserved that delightful consciousness of freedom under the standard of their fellow-citizens and chosen leaders, which no mere soldier can enjoy.” Truly, freedom is a blessed thing. How it exalts our nature, and how its purifying flame burns up all sordid interests and petty passions, consecrating anew not only the halls of legislation, but the temples of religion! When the delegates from 143 volunteer companies met in the church of Dungannon on the 15th of February, 1782, to demand in the name of their armed constituents, free trade, and an independent parliament, they passed the following resolution, with only two dissentient voices, viz. :—“That we hold the right of private judgment in matters of religion to be equally sacred in others as ourselves; Resolved, therefore, that as men, and as Irishmen, as Christians, and as Protestants, we rejoice in the relaxation of the penal laws against our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects, and that we conceive the measure to be fraught with the happiest consequences to the union and prosperity of the inhabitants of Ireland.”

It must be admitted, however, that the most liberal Protestants in Ireland were then but very partially enlightened on the question of religious liberty. When this resolution was adopted the most oppressive penal laws were still in force, and about the repeal of them, it was not thought prudent to say anything. But as soon as the parliament had acquired independence, it freed the statute-book from much of this evil; and ten years after, when the English government was terrified by the French Revolution,† they abolished all the worst parts of that diabolical code, and conceded to the Catholic people the infallible earnest of that great and final Emancipation, of which more than thirty years after O’Connell was the agent—namely, the **ELECTIVE FRANCHISE**.

The unanimity which pervaded all classes in Ireland in 1782, on the question of parliamentary independence, is a most extraordinary phenomenon. Party animosity seemed buried for ever. Not only the

\* Hallam’s *Middle Ages*, 8th edition, vol. 1, p. 414. Ibid. pp. 332 and 375.

† In 1792, the Catholic petition was rejected with the greatest contumely; in 1793, more favours than that petition sought were granted.—Dr. C. Taylor.

volunteer corps assembled and resolved; but the counties, the towns, the corporations, the university, and even the orange lodges held their enthusiastic meetings, and passed determined resolutions. These patriotic assemblies were managed by the nobility, the clergy, the gentry, sheriffs, mayors, &c. merging all distinctions of Whig and Tory, Catholic and Protestant.

It seemed as if all Ireland were then baptised in the regenerating spirit of nationality, and came forth with "a freer life and a fresher nature." The unanimous resolve of every meeting was, that "the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland, are the *only* power competent to make laws to bind this kingdom."

The parliament was animated by the same spirit. The Commons voted *nem. con.* an address to the king from the pen of Grattan, in which are the following sentiments:—"To assure his majesty that his subjects of Ireland are a free people; that the crown of Ireland is an imperial one, inseparably annexed to the crown of Great Britain, on which connexion the interests and happiness of both nations essentially depend; but that the kingdom of Ireland is a distinct kingdom, with a parliament of her own, the sole legislature thereof; that there is no body of men competent to make laws to bind this nation, except the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland; nor any other parliament which hath any authority or power of any sort whatever in this country, save only the parliament of Ireland. To assure his majesty that in this right, the very essence of our liberties exists—a right which we, on the part of all the people of Ireland, do claim as their birth-right, and which we cannot yield BUT WITH OUR LIVES."

"I am for honourable tranquillity," said Mr. Grattan, in a previous debate, (February 22, 1782,) "but when I see an administration, unable to make a blow against an enemy, tyrannize over Ireland, I am bound to exert every power to oppose it. \* \* \* Ireland is in strength; she has acquired her strength by the weaknesses of England; for Ireland was saved when America was lost! When England conquered Ireland was coerced; when she was defeated, Ireland was relieved! How necessary, therefore, to assert the rights of Ireland!"

On the 4th of May, the Attorney-General, Mr. Scott, declared in the most unqualified terms, that if the tenure of his office required him to admit the right of England to legislate for Ireland, "he held it to be an infamous tenure." On the 27th of the same month, the Duke of Portland, then Lord Lieutenant, came down to the house, and made a speech from the throne, containing the following sentiments:—"The British legislature have concurred in a resolution to

remove the causes of your discontents and jealousies, and are united in a desire to gratify every wish expressed in your late addresses to the throne. \* \* \* These benevolent intentions of his majesty, and the willingness of his parliament of Great Britain, to second his gracious purposes, are unaccompanied by any stipulation or condition whatever." This delighted Mr. Grattan, and the house, who, in their overflowing gratitude at once voted the sum of £100,000 for the defence of the Empire, declaring their renewed determination "to stand and fall with the British nation."

Mr. Flood, however, more sagacious or less confiding than Grattan, saw that there was no security for independence, unless the principle of 6th George I. were expressly repudiated. "What, then," he asked, "has Britain done?" "By seeming to yield unconditionally to you, she seized on the generous credulity of your nature, and took full advantage of a change in her own administration. Her first step was bold in order to strike your imaginations with something that seemed decisive." "Will you now," he demanded, "when you have your constitution in your hands, when you have your constitution in your ARMS, will you now accept of such a humiliating condition, and disgrace the cause of your country by such a pitiful expedient?" Again, "Some men, it is true, may do anything, while others are circumscribed in very narrow limits. But, will you not restore your constitution to what it was before Poyning's law? Your BILLS were transmitted to the king, engrossed on parchment, under the great seal of Ireland, and the royal assent, or dissent, was given to them in open parliament." Flood was right, but he failed.

"However," says Mr. John O'Connell, "that very year was not over, when what the Irish Parliament in their moderation would not ask, the English Parliament in their *fear*, set about conceding." Mr. Secretary Townshend then said, he hoped that Ireland would rest satisfied that "in no change of affairs, would England ever retract that faith, which in his opinion she had pledged when she repealed 6th George I., fully to surrender all legislative and judicial authority over Ireland." Accordingly it was enacted (23 George III. c. 28,) "that the right claimed by the people of Ireland to be bound only by laws enacted by his Majesty and the parliament of that kingdom, in all cases whatever, and to have all actions and suits at law or in equity, which may be instituted in that kingdom, decided in his Majesty's courts therein finally, and without appeal from thence, shall be and is hereby declared to be established and ascertained FOR EVER, and shall at no time hereafter be questioned or questionable."

We are told, that in agitating for a Repeal of the Union, Irishmen



are seeking to set aside a "solemn compact" between two nations, which should not be lightly infringed. We do not believe there was anything solemn about the Act of Union, though the complicated and enormous wickedness by which it was accomplished was sufficiently awful. But we have just quoted the terms of a compact as sacred as ever received royal signature. Why was it broken? Did not Great Britain pledge her faith in the sight of the world, that Ireland should retain her Legislative Independence "FOR EVER"—declaring solemnly, that "in no change of circumstances would she ever retract that faith?" Yet, ere twenty years had elapsed, that plighted faith of a great nation was forgotten; in the hour of Ireland's weakness and consternation, arising from the savage-like suppression of a rabble insurrection, which might have been prevented, she was robbed of her constitution! How absurd to talk of national compacts and "finality" after this! The framers of the Union, and those who sold their country, thankful that "they had a country to sell"—may have vowed and enacted that it should last "for ever," and the Imperial Parliament, in London, may shout "Amen."

Short-sighted legislators! Did they not remember that the same thing had been vowed and enacted in 1782 regarding the Irish Parliament, which with perfidious tyranny they took the very first foul opportunity of crushing? That parliament they were bound by every tie in the sight of God and man to preserve. But Ireland is restrained by no obligation moral or political from restoring it if she can; she has as good a right to do so, as a man prostrated by a robber, has to rise from the earth and resume his property.

However, the Irish Parliament fell. Speaking of Irish independence, Grattan with that sublime brevity and weighty antithesis for which his glorious eloquence was so remarkable, mournfully said, "I sat by its cradle—I followed its hearse." Who so fit as he to write its epitaph and vindicate its memory? It was thus he replied to Lord Clare's pamphlet on the Union:—

"That parliament, whose conduct the pamphlet reprobates, had seen the country, by restrictions on commerce, and by an illegal embargo on her provision trade, brought, in 1779, to a state of bankruptcy; that parliament had reposed in the liberality of the British Parliament an inexorable confidence; that parliament waited and waited, till she found, after the English session of 1778, nothing could be expected; and then that parliament—(and here behold the imperative principles of our constitution, and contemplate parliament as the true source of legitimate hope, though sometimes the just object of public disapprobation)—that parliament at length preferred

a demand—I say a demand—for a free trade, and expressed in a sentence the grievance of a country. They shorten the Money Bill, assert the spirit of the country, and break in one hour that chain which had blocked up your harbours for ages. They follow this by a support of government and of empire as ample as was their support of their country and of her commerce, bold and irresistible ; and do more to intimidate and deter the common enemy, than all your present loans and all your establishments.

“ I come to the second period, and here they fall back ; here they act reluctantly ; but here you see again the rallying principle of our constitution : that very parliament, whom the pamphlet vilifies, whom the minister thought he had at his feet—those very gentlemen whom the pamphlet disparages, whom the then secretary relied on as a rank majority, made common cause with the people (made a common cause with liberties), and, assisted and backed by the voice of that people, preserved, carried, and established the claim, inheritance, and liberties of the realm, and sent the secretary post to England to recant his political errors in his own country, and to register that recantation in the rolls of his own parliament. These achievements we are to estimate, not by the difficulties of the day, but by the difficulties resulting from the depression and degradation of ages. If we consider that the people and parliament, who had thus associated for the defence of the realm, and had added to the objects of their association the cause of trade and liberty, without which that realm did not deserve to be defended—had been in a great measure excluded from all the rest of the world, had been depressed for one hundred years (by commercial and political oppression, torn by religious divisions)—that their ministers had not seldom applied themselves to taint the integrity of the higher order, and very seldom (except so far as they concurred in the bounties of the legislature) applied themselves to relieve the condition of the lower order—that such a people and such a parliament should spontaneously associate, unite, arm, array, defend, illustrate, and free their country ; overawe bigotry, suppress riot, prevent invasion, and produce, as the offspring of their own head, armed cap-à-pee, like the Goddess of Wisdom, issuing from the Thunderer, commerce and constitution. What shall we say of such a people and such a parliament ? Let the author of the pamphlet retire to his closet, and ask pardon of his God for what he has written against his country ! ”

## CHAPTER VIII.

## REASONS FOR ABOLISHING THE IRISH PARLIAMENT.

“It is the denial of the rights of nature to a great nation, from an intolerance of its prosperity.”—CHIEF JUSTICE BUSHE.

MANY plausible reasons were addressed to the Irish Parliament to betray it into a surrender of its existence; but it can be proved satisfactorily that the following were the main causes of the determination to carry that measure at all hazards, viz. “Intolerance of Irish prosperity,” and Pitt’s vexation about the Regency question.

I. That England has ever striven to depress and impoverish this country, and that the false and narrow maxims of monopoly led her, in times past, to cripple our trade and limit our commerce, under the ignorant notion that our gain was her loss, is placed beyond doubt by her own best authorities, throughout a series of ages.

In 1360 a law was passed “giving leave for all kinds of merchandise to be exported from and into Ireland, as well by aliens as denizens; and also \* \* \* that all persons who have lands and possessions in Ireland might freely import thither, and also export from that kingdom their own commodities; which liberty in our days (A. D. 1763, says Anderson) would be deemed unsafe and dangerous.”\* Nearly a century earlier than this, Sir William Temple advised the Irish Lord Lieutenant thus:—“Regard must be had to those points, wherein the trade of Ireland comes to interfere with that of England—in which case the Irish trade ought to be declined, so as to give way to the trade of England.”

An English writer on Trade, in 1727, after apologising for his “very bold proposition,” so opposite to the universally received opinion, “that it were better for England if Ireland were no more!” proceeds to argue that the trade of Ireland might be made very profitable to England. He says the situation of the former for an extended trade is “more advantageous than that of any other nation in

\* Anderson’s History of Commerce, v. 1. p. 321.



Europe. Its harbours are many and commodious, its inhabitants numerous and hardy, inured to want and labour, and able on poor fare to run through a great deal of work." Mark the inducements which he holds out to the legislature of his country to *tolerate* Irish trade! "The politeness, the gaiety, the power of our court, allure all those who are studious either of improvement, of pleasure, or of preferment. This drains from them the rents of most of the great estates of that kingdom, and every increase of their wealth will (by enlarging the rent-rolls of those already settled there, and by enabling others to taste the delights of a court, who, by the narrowness of their present fortunes, are confined at home) greatly enlarge this inlet of their money, and increase our drafts upon them, which, together with the restrictions on the exportation of their wool, and other advantages which we have of them in trade, will cause to centre in England all, or the most part, of their acquisitions on the general balance." This is English policy.

How well Ireland could avail herself of her natural facilities for trade and commerce when left at liberty to develop her resources, we may see from the following passage:—"From the establishment of the Act of Settlement and Explanation Ireland had rapidly increased in wealth and improvement, to the admiration and envy of her neighbours, till it was again laid waste under the revolutionary wars of William III.; and even from this calamity it was recovering with such quickness, that in 1698 the balance of trade in its favour amounted to between four and five hundred thousand pounds."\*

Thus it would appear that, even civil war, with all its wasting horrors, was less injurious to Irish prosperity than the Union! The nation had then a latent energy, a recuperative power, by which she quickly extricated herself from the greatest calamities; but now she has no life of her own, and all her interests languish. However, she was not long allowed liberty to repair by industry the desolations of ambition:—"The effects were permanent of restricting laws, insurmountable by the fertility of the soil, the ingenuity of the inhabitants, navigable rivers, and a multitude of harbours."

To the inexorable pertinacity with which this crushing policy was pursued towards our unhappy country, the following impartial witnesses will sufficiently testify. It cannot be alleged that *theirs* are the complaints of Irish grievance-mongers:—

"British legislation on all occasions controlled Irish commerce with a very high hand—universally on the principle of monopoly—as if the

\* Barlow's History of Ireland, v. 1. p. 290.

poverty of Ireland were her wealth." So wrote Arthur Young, in his Tour (1776-7). Again, in 1785, Pitt declared that "from the Revolution till within these few years, the *system* had been that of debarring Ireland from the use of her own resources, and making her subservient to the interests and opulence of the English people."

Mr. Grenville (afterwards Lord Grenville) said, "if England were heavily taxed, she had now, and had had for a whole century past, the benefits of a widely-extended trade, from which she had excluded Ireland—and the latter had already given to England all that she could have made, if by a barbarous and equally absurd policy, she had not been debarred from those advantages, that God and nature had given her." Even Pitt, in 1799, was obliged to admit that "Ireland had long felt the narrow policy of Great Britain, who, influenced by views of trade and commercial advantage, and stained and perverted with selfish motives, had treated her with partiality and neglect, and never looked on her prosperity as that of the empire at large."

"Is it not well known," asked Mr. Huskisson, (March 21, 1825,) "that, till 1780, the agriculture, internal industry, manufactures, commerce, and navigation of Ireland, were held in the most rigid subserviency—to the supposed interests of Great Britain? In 1778 there was a proposal to allow her to import sugar direct, and to export every thing but woollens to pay for it; and this proposal was almost made a question of allegiance by the great towns of Great Britain, and so it was lost! In 1779 a more limited concession to her was also lost! But towards the close of that year, the disasters in North America and the state of things in Ireland, produced a different feeling in the British Parliament—STATE necessities, acting under a sense of political danger, yielded without grace that which good sense and good feeling had before recommended in vain; and in 1782, under the like pressure, those concessions were rendered irrevocable."

"But," said Mr. Labouchere in 1841, "every liberal relaxation encountered violent opposition by strong petitions from Manchester, Glasgow, and Liverpool; the merchants of the latter place said that if Ireland were placed on the same footing with England, the port and town of Liverpool would fall back to its former state."

This disgraceful spirit seems to have been evoked by Lord Strafford, who said, he "discouraged all he could the little beginnings of a clothing trade he found among the Irish, lest they should undersell the English, which they were able to do." He said he endeavoured to turn the attention of the Irish to the manufacture of linen. But wool was their natural staple, which they had in excellence and abundance,

and if they had found it their interest to add the cultivation of flax and the manufacture of linen, they had a right to do so; and it was impertinent in Strafford to meddle with such affairs. But he was true to the fancied interest of his own country, and cared nothing about Ireland, except so far as it could be made subservient to that. By several enactments in the reign of Charles II., a prohibitory duty was laid on the import of Irish woollen goods into England; the exportation thither of Irish cattle was also forbidden as "a nuisance" as well as all exports of value from this country to the colonies, and the import of sugar, tobacco, cotton, indigo, steel, Jamaica wood, &c., unless first unloaded in an English port.\* These jealous restrictions were designed to guard more against a possible than an actual danger to English interests; for Irish manufactures and commerce, though making some progress, were not then in a condition to give much annoyance.

After the Revolution, the Protestant party in Ireland, feeling that they could not permanently maintain their ascendancy without the constant aid of England, were obliged to purchase it by sacrificing their woollen trade—a price which England was not slow to demand. The English lords and commons addressed the King, telling him plainly that they wished him to declare to his Irish subjects, that "the growth and increase of the woollen manufacture there hath long been, and will ever be looked upon with great jealousy;" threatening that they might otherwise have to enact "very strict laws totally to prohibit and suppress the same."†

William's answer was brief and to the point. He said, "I shall do all that in me lies to discourage the woollen manufacture in Ireland, and to encourage the linen manufacture there."

Now this woollen trade had been thoroughly naturalised in Ireland; we have parliamentary authority for the fact, that our woollen goods were in demand and high repute in foreign countries so early as 1357. The raw materials were every where at hand, and the people were accustomed to the business, while flax seed had to be imported; it was a precarious and troublesome crop, and yet did not give employment to nearly as many hands nor yield so much profit as the other.‡

According to William's promise he wrote to the Lords Justices, stating, that it was never so necessary to have "a good session of parliament." A bill was brought in agreeably to the royal wish,

\* Charles II., c. 12, 15, 22, and 23.

† English Lords' Journals, 1698, pp. 314, 315.

‡ Report of the Commissioners on hand-loom weavers, 1840: Anderson's History of Commerce, vol. 3, p. 194.



and being urgently pressed through the Irish legislature, it received the royal assent January 29, 1698; other acts, still more stringent, were subsequently passed in England, which amounted to a total prohibition. These unwise laws naturally defeated the purpose of English monopoly. Our woollen manufactures were forced away into France, Germany, and Spain, and they were enabled thus to vie with England in the foreign market. Meantime, multitudes in Ireland were thrown out of employment, and, what was felt more keenly in England, the severest penalties could not prevent a contraband trade in this country. At length the wiser heads over the water began to consider the restrictions hurtful (to themselves) and to wish for their removal.

As to the promise to encourage our linen trade—it proved illusory—like most similar promises from the same quarter. “So little was England really disposed to keep her promise, that our linens, painted, striped, chequered, printed, stained, or dyed, were practically excluded by her so early as 1711, by the act of 10th Anne, c. 19, which was directed against all such linens made in foreign parts, and was by a strained construction made to apply to Ireland. \* \* \* By an act of the year 1750, she heavily taxed the import of sail cloth made of Irish hemp,” thereby throwing the trade into the hands of the Russians, Germans, and Dutch. Penalties on the export of Irish wool, which had been appropriated “to the encouragement of the linen manufacture of Ireland,” she handed over to the crown. And again, “lest by any possibility Ireland should reap much benefit from the act of 1742, (delusive as it was to a great extent,) which gave bounties on the export of Irish as well as English linens exported from England; an act of the year 1756, the 29th George II. c. 15, provided that no Irish linen so exported, should be entitled to the bounty, if it were the property of a *resident* in Ireland!” \*

If this was England’s encouragement to Irish trade, what must her hostility have been! Then see how this same spirit was made to foster the bigotry of creed and race in Ireland. Mr. Assistant Commissioner Otway, in his Report (Part III.) on the condition of the hand-loom weavers, above referred to, says: “One great and fatal error in the system of colonization to which I have adverted was, that it became a fixed principle of policy to exclude the native Irish from the benefits of all the improved arts introduced by the new settlers. \* \* \* But for the unhappy difference of religion between the settlers and the natives, this exclusive system would not

have been long maintained; the Irish and the English would gradually have amalgamated, like the Normans and the Saxons; but the distinction of religion gave strength and permanence to the distinction of race, and rendered the line of demarcation scarcely less broad than if it had been perpetuated by difference of colour and physical organization.

“The hand-loom weavers, the wool-combers, the clothiers, the dyers, the whitesmiths, and even the mariners in the south of Ireland were so exclusively Protestant that they would not allow a Roman Catholic apprentice to be received into any of their trades! The only branch of manufacture permitted to the ‘mere Irish’ was that of brogues or common shoes; and even this trade was not permitted to be carried on within the precincts of the walled towns. Hence these manufactures were and continued to be exotics; they struck no root in the soil. \* \* \* James II. in his letters ascribes his failures in Ireland to the fact that the Protestants alone understood the art of making and mending gun-locks.”

This able and highly respectable Protestant writer goes on to show that the Huguenots, who fled from the atrocious bigotry of Louis XIV., and settled here, establishing different branches of trade in various parts of the country, adopted the same hateful system of exclusion. “The Duke of Ormond, following the example of the Earl of Cork, also prohibited the instruction of Roman Catholic apprentices, as did the principal landholders who encouraged foreigners to settle on their estates.”

Mr. Otway continues: “Now, this exclusive system at once destroyed the basis of all manufacturing prosperity—the home market. The fabrics introduced by the English and French settlers were of a superior quality, for which the native Irish could only gradually acquire a want, as they were raised in the scale of civilization. But instead of thus raising them, the foreign manufacturers, aided by the legislature, employed every possible means to depress them, and thus blindly drove from their own market a whole nation of customers, and confined them to the use of the rude and cheap fabrics which were woven among themselves. The manufacturers were thus forced to rely on their foreign trade; but here they came into competition with the English merchants, and aroused the spirit of commercial jealousy. The act of William, prohibiting the export of Irish wool and woollens, destroyed the Irish woollen manufactures, simply because they depended almost solely on foreign sale for their support. There was no independent peasantry or respectable and wealthy middle class for them to supply.”

“ To the enumeration in detail of English injuries to our trade,” says Mr. John O’Connell, “ we have unfortunately to add one striking instance, general in its effect. From 1740 to 1759 there were no less than twenty-four embargoes in Ireland ! \* \* \* Thus by all possible means—namely, by direct and actively oppressive legislation—by false interpretation and forced construction of laws supposed to have no such object ; by real breach, under a seeming observance of international engagements, and even by an unconstitutional exercise of the prerogative, Irish industry and enterprise were cruelly restrained and repressed to the verge of ruin.”\*

In turning away from the distressing history of national cupidity and extortion, which empoverished one country without enriching the other, what reader will not heartily respond to the sentiment of the honourable gentleman just quoted, when he says, that this wretched history “ ought to make an impression upon every honest Irishman, and warn him from that execrable religious discord which so divided the nation against itself as to render it incapable of resisting these monstrous outrages ? ” I was going to add, that I am ashamed of my country for having so long and so tamely endured them ;—but I should be much more ashamed if she had been guilty of inflicting the wrongs which she has so patiently borne.

This animus against Ireland still survives in the English mind ;—this sordid propensity still conquers its better nature, and sends evil deeds with quick and stealthy step, in the track of fair professions. She “ sees and approves the best, but still the worst pursues.” She talks of the constitution, and practices coercion. How can it well be otherwise ? She but follows the natural propensity of power, and her victim cannot effectually resist.

“ Great nations,” said Grattan, “ when cursed with unnatural sway, follow but their nature when they invade ; and human wisdom has not better provided for human safety than by limiting the principles of human power.” But what limits can Ireland now put to the power of Great Britain ? Her position is accurately described by Mr. Mason, a member of the Irish Parliament and a supporter of government, when speaking of Mr. Secretary Orde’s commercial propositions :—

“ The house,” said he, “ should recollect they were not going to form an indissoluble contract, like the treaty of Union between England and Scotland ; for the moment the act of Union passed, the Parliament of Scotland was annihilated, or rather merged in that

\* An Argument, &c., p. 164.



of Great Britain; and if the articles of Union had proved highly oppressive to the people of Scotland they were left without resource, except they should find it in the moderation of the British Parliament, or the hazards of a civil war!"

But, happily, at the period which we are now to notice, Ireland had a parliament. This was her resource—her palladium! She put forth its power nobly in defence of her trade. She demanded perfect freedom for her commerce, and she won it. But it was a fatal victory—one that provoked unquenchable hostility to her legislature, and entailed utter ruin. In 1779, when an attempt to open the colonial trade to Ireland failed, "the citizens of Dublin, the grand juries in many parts of Ireland, and the people throughout the country met, and passed strong resolutions in their different assemblies, condemnatory of the 'avarice and ingratitude' of Great Britain, her illiberal and contracted policy, &c., and pledging themselves to Irish manufacture." This mode of appeal seemed effectually to reach the heart of England, and caused the complaints of Ireland to be listened to with unwonted attention. Other circumstances, too, made her demeanour towards this country much more respectful than before. America had revolted. The combined fleets of France and Spain "rode triumphant in the channel." The volunteers repelled the invader from their coasts, and were determined not to lay down their arms till they obtained free trade and independence. These things opened the eyes of Britain wonderfully; and she all at once discovered a vast deal of reason in the old complaints about Irish grievances!

The Irish Commons (October 12, 1779) declared in an address to the King, that it was "not by temporary expedients, but by *free trade alone*, that this nation is now to be saved from impending ruin." Concessions were made by the English minister, but accompanied by aggressions on the legislative rights of Ireland, which roused the national spirit to the utmost, and raised the loud cry for parliamentary independence. In 1785 came "Orde's commercial propositions," so called from the name of the secretary who introduced them in the Irish House of Commons. To these Pitt had added a number of his own framing, in which he insidiously introduced principles subversive of Irish independence, and slyly designed to pave the way for the Union, which he was now bent on effecting in due time. His representative in Ireland, however, disclaimed any such intention, deprecating the idea that England would do anything "so wild, so absurd, so ungenerous," as to attack Irish independence. "He wanted words to express his abhorrence of the idea."

Yet was the purpose palpable, and Grattan described the measure

as “an union—an incipient and a creeping union—a virtual union establishing *one will* in the general concerns of commerce and navigation, and reposing that will in the Parliament of Great Britain.” It was then that this great man exclaimed—“If any body of men are justified in thinking that the IRISH CONSTITUTION is incompatible with the British empire—perish the empire!—live the constitution!”

In the English Parliament these propositions were avowedly treated as a step towards the Union. The real mind of the British government and people is expressed in the following passage from the Annual Register for 1790, p. 33:—“To whatever independence Ireland may advance her claim, she is nothing more than the province and *servant* of England. \* \* \* The daily routine of her affairs, and the ordinary course of her administration, will be modelled in conformity to the *interests*, the *prejudices*, and the *jealousies* of the country that is the seat of empire.” It was therefore determined to make her formally what she had been rendered virtually by undue and unconstitutional influence. That the greatest statesmen regarded a union with England as a legal subjection to a condition of the lowest degradation, is evident from the words of the illustrious Charles Fox, in the debate on the Commercial Propositions: “I will not barter English commerce for Irish slavery.”

The concessions, such as they were—and Mr. Orde represented them as a great boon, freely bestowed by English generosity—alarmed the British monopolists, insomuch that Pitt found it necessary to send circular letters to the manufacturing towns, telling them “that nothing effectual had been granted to Ireland.” This legerdemain played off by the two ministers was happily exposed in parliament by Mr. Fox:—“It had struck him as a singular instance of ingenuity, that in opening the outlines of the plan, Mr. Pitt had done away with a good deal of what had been said upon the subject in another speech to another assembly. Indeed, his (Mr. Pitt’s) speech had been little else than an answer to Mr. Secretary Orde in the Irish House of Commons. \* \* \* In Ireland they had been stated as highly advantageous to that country, putting it on the footing of Great Britain, and rendering it an emporium of trade, and the source and supply of the British market. In England and in that house they were told that the propositions were such as this country (England) might gladly accede to. Why? Because it gives Ireland nothing but what it had before—because Ireland cannot rival you—because Ireland is poor and feeble; and because Ireland must remain so, if not for ever, at least for a considerable length of time.”

In order to pacify the commercial jealousy of England, to which

the least cloud in the horizon, promising at some future time to rain prosperity on Ireland, seemed fraught with ruin to that country, Pitt assured the parliament that the great advantage to Scotland predicted as the consequence of her union had not been realised,—that England had been more benefited by it; and that the result of the Union had been such as *not* to make her “averse to the repetition of the experiment.” The *design* the minister here hinted at, and the tendency of the propositions to effect it, were so evident, that Mr. Fox declared in the same debate, that by this plan “Ireland would lose her legislature, and again become a dependant, a subordinate kingdom.”

The plan, however, met such decided and influential opposition in the Irish parliament, that it was abandoned. Pitt resolved to humble the sturdy guardian of Irish prosperity in another form and to hasten the Union. The prosperity enjoyed in Ireland during the brief era of independence has been questioned; but if the express and emphatic testimony of men of all parties, from their positions most competent to judge, and having no interest to deceive, may be taken as evidence, no fact can be clearer than that, under the all-pervading and healthful stimulus of freedom, imperfect as it was, the improvement of Ireland was unparalleled. The authorities quoted by Mr. O’Connell in the Corporation Debate on the Union, and often elsewhere, place the matter beyond doubt.

Pitt himself admitted the great prosperity of Ireland under her own independent legislature; but instead of letting well enough alone, he argued that “as Ireland was so prosperous under her own parliament, we can calculate that the amount of that prosperity will be trebled under a British legislature.” Lord Clare, whose office as chancellor gives his authority the greatest weight, in a speech delivered in 1798, and subsequently published by himself, declared—that “There is not a nation on the face of the habitable globe which has advanced in cultivation, in agriculture, in manufactures, with the same rapidity, in the same period, as Ireland”—(viz., from 1782 to 1798.)

Lord Grey (then Mr. Charles Grey) stated in 1799, that since 1781 “the prosperity of Scotland had been considerable, but certainly not so great as that of Ireland has been within the same period.” Lord Plunket, speaking in parliament in 1799, used the following eloquent and patriotic language, in which he describes Ireland as “a little island, with a population of 4 or 5,000,000 of people, hardy, gallant, and enthusiastic—possessed of all the means of civilization, agriculture, and commerce, well pursued and understood; a constitution fully



recognised and established ; her revenues, her trade, her manufactures thriving beyond the hope or the example of any other country of her extent ; within these few years advancing with a rapidity astonishing even to herself ; not complaining of deficiency even in these respects, but enjoying and acknowledging her prosperity. She is called upon to surrender them all to the control of—whom ? Is it to a great and powerful continent, to whom nature intended her as an appendage—to a mighty people totally exceeding her in all calculation of territory or population ? No ! but to another happy little island, placed beside her in the bosom of the Atlantic, of little more than double her territory and population, and possessing resources, not nearly so superior to her wants.”

The bankers of Dublin, who, of all people, ought to be the best judges of Irish prosperity, held a meeting in December, 1798, at which they “ Resolved—That since the renunciation of the power of Great Britain in 1782, to legislate for Ireland, the commerce and prosperity of this kingdom have eminently increased. Resolved—That we attribute these blessings, under divine Providence, to the wisdom of the Irish Parliament.” The guild of merchants met the month following, and passed a similar resolution, declaring, “ That the commerce of Ireland has increased, and her manufactures improved beyond example, since the independence of this kingdom was restored by the exertions of our countrymen in 1782.”

The unanimity with which all ascribe this wonderful prosperity to parliamentary independence is remarkable. How can any candid mind resist the conclusion that they were united as cause and effect,—or deny that a similar cause would produce similar effects now ? “ Some of us,” said Mr. Hutton, in 1810, “ some of us remember this country as she was before we recovered and brought back our constitution in the year 1782. We are reminded of it by the present period. Then, as now, our merchants were without trade, our shopkeepers without customers, our workmen without employment ; then, as now, it became the universal feeling, that nothing but the recovery of our rights could save us. Our rights were recovered ; and now, soon afterwards, indeed, as if by magic, plenty smiled on us, and we soon became prosperous and happy.”

No wonder the names of the men who felled this fair and fruitful tree of national life, are held in everlasting infamy in Ireland. Only the serpent in paradise could furnish a fit comparison for the envious and wily policy of the diabolical agents, who beheld all this good with vexation, and blasted so bright a prospect ! I conclude this part of

my subject in the words of the late Lord Chief Justice Bushe. Speaking of the Union, that fine orator said—"I forget for a moment the unprincipled means by which it has been promoted—I pass by for a moment the unseasonable time at which it has been introduced, and the contempt of parliament on which it is bottomed, and I look upon it simply as England reclaiming in a moment of your weakness that dominion which you extorted from her in a moment of your virtue—a dominion which she uniformly abused, which invariably oppressed and impoverished you, and from the cessation of which you date all your prosperity. It is a measure which goes to degrade the country, by saying it is unfit to govern itself, and to stultify the parliament by saying it is incapable of governing the country. It is the revival of the odious and absurd title of conquest;—it is the renewal of the abominable distinction between mother country and colony which lost America; it is the denial of the rights of nature to a great nation FROM AN INTOLERANCE OF ITS PROSPERITY."

II. Another cause which led Mr. Pitt to determine on the annihilation of the Irish legislature, was the mortification it gave him in thwarting his plans regarding the regency, during the King's temporary alienation of mind. On the 16th of December, 1788, Mr. Pitt moved and carried three resolutions in the English Commons—"the first affirmative of the fact that the King's condition rendered him incapable of exercising the royal authority; the second declaratory of the right of the parliament of Great Britain to supply the proper remedy in such a contingency; and the third, that they should consider that remedy. Upon the 30th of January following both houses of parliament presented to the Prince of Wales a series of resolutions, appointing him Regent, but with the limitations of restricting him from creating peers, from granting offices, saving during his Majesty's pleasure, and from making any grants of the King's real or personal estate." \* \* \* Opposed to these resolutions were fifty-five peers, on the ground that parliament exceeded its constitutional powers in imposing the restrictions on the Regent, who, however, consented to fill the office, being moved thereto by the urgency of the case.

On the 5th of February, 1789, the Lord Lieutenant, the Marquis of Buckingham, in opening the Irish Parliament, announced the fact regarding the King. An attempt was made to procure an adjournment for a week, till the English resolutions should arrive. This was defeated as derogatory to the dignity of parliament; and a motion was carried, after much opposition from the treasury bench, to present an address to the Prince of Wales, requesting him to take the duties of

the Regency upon him, without any limitations. A similar resolution was passed in the Lords, with twenty-three dissentient voices. The Lord Lieutenant refused to forward the address, whereupon a deputation from each house was appointed for the purpose, and were very graciously received by the Prince. But the King's recovery soon after put an end to the unpleasant proceedings. This conduct of our parliament was exceedingly offensive to the English minister, and he never forgave it. His revenge was the Union!



## CHAPTER IX.

## THE MEANS BY WHICH THE UNION WAS CARRIED.

“They resorted to a system of coercion to support a system of corruption, which they closed by a system of torture, attendant on a conspiracy of which their crimes were the cause.”—GRATTAN.

## SECTION I.—THE REBELLION.

THERE is good reason to believe that Pitt regarded the independence of the Irish parliament as a measure yielded to intimidation, therefore, unconstitutionally obtained, and to be “recaptured” as soon as possible, by fair means or foul. To do him justice, we must admit that he tried the fair means first. He sent Lord Fitzwilliam as viceroy, with the understanding that the Catholics should be emancipated, and that the ascendancy of the Beresford family, who, then, with their relative, Lord Clare, ruled Ireland for their own profit, should be completely broken up.

But the interest of this family proved too strong for the honest Earl Fitzwilliam. Their intrigues at court prevailed—and when the alternative was decisively put by the Lord Lieutenant to the prime minister—“Beresford or Fitzwilliam”—the fatal choice was soon made; the former was retained, the latter recalled. This measure alone was sufficient to ignite the combustible materials that now lay so thick all over the surface of the country. The selection of *such* a viceroy was an omen for good, which excited the liveliest hopes among the Catholic population, and the friends of freedom in general. But no sooner was the cup of joy raised to the lips of Ireland, than the minister of England, like a mocking demon, dashed it to the ground, exposing the nation to the most perilous risk of insurrection.

On this occasion, the mind of Pitt, certainly his policy, underwent a sudden change. He earnestly urged Lord Fitzwilliam to postpone the question of Emancipation, assigning a reason, of which time has too clearly developed the mystery. He intended, in fact, to make Emancipation the price of the union; and, therefore, wished to have

that subject kept in abeyance, till circumstances should be ripe for the accomplishment of his darling scheme. Had the king's conscience yielded on the Catholic question, I believe we should have had no rebellion in Ireland; but as the royal bigotry was inflexible, it became necessary to have a certain quantity of Irish blood to cement the imperial policy. Let no reader be startled at the apparent uncharitableness of this language. It is not as strong as much that I shall soon quote from the highest Protestant authorities, and it is yet far too feeble to reprobate justly the execrable facts, which it is my painful duty to record.

To return to Pitt. In urging Lord Fitzwilliam to keep back the question of Emancipation, he said it would be "the means of doing a greater service to the British Empire than it has been capable of receiving since the Revolution, or at least since the union" (with Scotland.) But that noble lord disdained to be the instrument of a sinister policy—and so he left the stage clear for the tragedies in which Castlereagh and Clare were to be the chief actors.

The great error of the volunteers was their religious bigotry. It is astonishing to find even a Charlemont shuddering at the thought of Catholic Emancipation. Indeed this great body of armed citizens used their power to very little purpose. 'Tis true they rendered invasion hopeless to England's enemies; and they also won a measure of parliamentary independence, which a strange oversight in Grattan and others almost rendered futile, and prepared the way for the aggressions that issued in the sanguinary insurrection of '98. But their talk about parliamentary reform, while three-fourths of the population were shut out of the constitution, and taxed without their consent, was preposterous in the extreme. Their illiberality and dissension on this subject rendered their dissolution a matter of less regret than it would otherwise have been.

As Ulster was at that time completely electrified with French enthusiasm for liberty and the rights of man; as the Revolution, so glorious in its first stages—a dazzling sun emerging from the chaos of despotism, and destined soon to set in a deluge of blood—had taught all men, that Catholics as well as Protestants, could know their rights, and knowing, dare maintain them, the society of *United Irishmen* was formed at Belfast, and quickly spread all over the kingdom, till the ill-fated Lord Edward Fitzgerald could count on about 400,000 men, armed and ready to take the field, at a signal from the leaders, who waited only for a French fleet, to seize the Castle authorities, and convert Ireland into a republic.

The proceedings of this body were at first open, and under the

check of public opinion. But, being proclaimed down by government, they met in secret, their organization, most skilfully ramified throughout the kingdom, became military, and the society thence formed was the netted prey of internal, but unsuspected treachery.

The report of the secret parliamentary committee which sat in 1798, made strange, ever memorable, and most instructive disclosures.

Lord Clare acknowledged in the Imperial Parliament, in 1801, that the government learned nothing from the state prisoners in '98 which they had not been fully acquainted with before. The United Irishmen employed an agent, named Jackson, to negotiate with France for military aid; and so early as 1794, this treasonable correspondence was revealed to Pitt by one Cockayne, and yet Jackson was suffered to return to Ireland, and to aid in spreading the conspiracy through the country!

Indeed we are met at every turn by triple treason in this melancholy chapter of our history. From 1795 a regular system of *espionage* was established by the government, sustained by a profuse expenditure of the secret service money. Colonel Maguane, or Magin, of Saintfield, a member of the provincial and county committees, and also a colonel of the United Irishmen, enjoying their full confidence, and attending their secret meetings regularly during the whole of '97 and on to June '98, as regularly reported the proceedings to the Rev. John Cleland, the agent and chaplain of Lord Londonderry, through whom the intelligence was conveyed to Lord Castlereagh. The leaders, therefore, could have been arrested at any time, and a rising of the people effectually prevented, had it suited the policy of the men whom God in his anger entrusted with power over this country.

Some of them, it is true, were from time to time arrested and thrown into prison. Counsellor M'Nally was their advocate, entrusted not only with their secrets, but with the sacred responsibility of defending their lives and liberties before the legal tribunals; but even *he* was in the pay of government, and enjoyed during life a pension of £300 a year—a fact that was never known or suspected till after his death. M'Gucken, also, of Belfast, their solicitor, was secretly bribed by government, and received at different times for his services no less than £1450, besides other sums not set down to his name. But the villany becomes deeper still! There was a person named Hughes, a bookseller in Belfast, who so thoroughly enjoyed the confidence of the rebellious society, that they gave him a commission to go through the different towns in the North, to arrange for the defence of the prisoners at the ensuing trials, and received a large sum—a hundred pounds, I think—for every town he visited.



This man, too, was the well-paid spy of the Castle! He was arrested two or three times, to lull suspicion; and in Dublin he was sent in among the prisoners, as if doomed to the heaviest vengeance of the law, where, by exciting the pity of the other prisoners and feigning madness, he was enabled to hear their conversations, and report them daily to his immaculate employers!\*

Just think of the condition of these unhappy patriots, many of them with hearts as noble as ever throbbed for a country's freedom, whose characters were pure, amiable, excellent, free from every stain except the damning one of treason, which it pleased not Providence here (as in America) to transform into the honourable remembrancer of a glorious Revolution! Think of these generous enthusiasts trusting their lives and families to the integrity of miscreants, who undertook to be their advocates and defenders, their shields against the poisoned darts of a vindictive government, and were paid by that very government to betray them!

The infamous Reynolds, who informed on the United leaders assembled at the house of Bond in Dublin, received the following sums:—

Pension for 37 years, at £920 per annum,	£34,040
Gratuities at different times, . . . . .	5,500
Consulship at Lisbon, . . . . .	5,600
Consulship in Iceland, . . . . .	600
	<hr/>
	£45,740

This is a pretty round sum of *public* money—of the *people's* money—for *one* informer; but, better still—the pension of £1000 Irish reverted to his family at his death, who are actually in the enjoyment of it *now*, nearly fifty years after the “wages of iniquity” were earned!!

The poor Sheares! Shall we hesitate to call them martyrs, mistaken and misled as they were? Oh! how much less worthy of a felon's doom than the minions of power, who vindictively thirsted for their blood! In an address, dated Patrick's-day, 1798, John wrote—“If Ireland shall be forced to throw away the scabbard, let it be at her own time, not theirs.”

Alas! it was “*at theirs.*” “It has been said,” remarked Mr. Grattan, in his speech on the subject of General Lake's proclamation, “that it were better the people should proceed to violence; nay, it has been said in so many words, ‘it were to be wished they would

\* For the deeply interesting details see Madden's History of the United Irishmen, and Moore's Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald.

rebel.' Good God! wished they would rebel! Here is the system and the principle of the system. From corruption to coercion, and so on to military execution, accompanied by a declaration that it were to be wished the people would go into rebellion!" Lord Castle-reagh, in his examination of Dr. M'Nevin before the secret committee, avowed that "means were taken to make the United Irish system *explode*."

Excitable and combustible as the Irish people are, this was remarkably difficult. I venture to assert that there is not a people on the face of the earth at once so spirited and so hard to be driven into rebellion.

I have no space for a detail of the horrors that preceded the explosion of '98, and were evidently intended to precipitate an event so devoutly wished for by our benevolent government! Let us glance at a few of them.

It appears from the report of the parliamentary committee on Orangeism, in 1836, that the first Orange lodge was formed in the village of Loughgall, county Armagh, in the house of a person named Sloan, in the year 1795. In 1796, says Plowden, (vol. ii., p. 377) no less than 7,000 Catholics had been forced or burned out of that country, by the Orangemen, encouraged, connived at, and protected by government. Mr. Christie, a Quaker, living in that neighbourhood, heard sometimes of twelve or fourteen Catholic houses wrecked in a night. This "lawless banditti," as they were called by Lord Gosford, in a meeting of magistrates, in executing their "wide and tremendous proscription," had expelled half the inhabitants of a populous district, and "driven them in the midst of an inclement winter to seek shelter for their hapless families, where chance might guide them." "Those horrors," said he, "are now acting with *impunity*."\*

Not only were these things winked at; they were encouraged by government, who passed a bill of indemnity to secure the leaders and magisterial accomplices from legal proceedings. Judging from more recent occurrences in that part of the world, they might safely have let the law take its course. Sheriffs, sub-sheriffs, and juries, grand and petty, were then as "loyal" as they have often proved themselves since. Thank God, these dreadful times are passed for ever; and Orangemen, in general, cherish a very different spirit now. May Christian charity and brotherly conciliation grow daily, till Irishmen of every party are united, not by secret oaths, but in the bonds of a

\* Edinburgh Review, January, 1836.

generous patriotism, open, manly, peaceful, acting always above board, "in the world's approving eyes."

This impunity, however, called forth the "defenders;" and they met a different treatment; for Lord Carhampton transported thirteen hundred of them *without trial*. Meantime, the insurrection act, martial law, free quarters, house-burnings, tortures, and military executions, were the portion of the poor Catholics who remained at home. The state of things in 1797, is thus described by Lord Moira, in the English house of peers, in a speech delivered on the 22nd of November, of that year. He said that these horrors were part of "a system, deliberately determined upon, and regularly persevered in."  
\* \* \* \* The most absurd, as well as the most disgusting tyranny that ever a nation groaned under"—which must result in "hatred to the English name." He declared that during that year the *curfew*, the badge of slavery, was so rigidly enforced, that in one place a woman would not be allowed to light a candle to give medicine to her daughter who was dying in convulsions! Persons were thrown into prison in equal ignorance of their crimes and their accusers. Innocent people were tortured to extort confessions. He knew a man on mere suspicion picketed till he fainted; again, when he recovered, till he fainted once more, and then picketed the third time! These torturings were "notorious." In other respects, too, the greatest cruelties were practised by the military and yeomanry. Triangles, half-hangings, and pitched caps were the order of the day. All which, Lord Moira declared himself ready to prove at their lordships' bar.\*

In August, 1798, the Lord Chancellor Clare put the following question in the secret committee:—"Pray, Mr. Emmett, what caused the late insurrection?"

*Ans.* "The free quarters, house-burnings, tortures, and the military executions in the counties Kildare, Carlow, and Wicklow!" This was not denied. On the contrary, the report of that committee, states that "it appears from a variety of evidence laid before your committee, that the rebellion would not have broken out as soon as it did, had it not been for the *well-timed measures* adopted by government, subsequent to the proclamation of the Lord Lieutenant and council, bearing date, 30th of March, 1798."

Among the chief of these measures, adopted by the functionaries of the most civilized government in the world, at the close of the



eighteenth century, were *treachery* and *torture*. We have already noticed the fact. Hughes was instructed to act a part in order to worm himself into the confidence of the state prisoners. Many of the other informers maintained their intimacy with the United Irishmen, to the last moment; and some had the fiendish hardihood to visit their bereaved and wretched families, as if to condole with them in their distress, but, really, it would seem, to revel in the agony and ruin which their own perfidy had wrought. It was thus that Reynolds acted with the wife of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and the infamous Captain Armstrong with the Sheares.

This base man, whom his own relatives swore to be utterly unprincipled, sought an introduction to the two brothers, professed to be a convert to their principles, and to be most anxious to exert all his abilities, and to use all his opportunities, as an officer, in aiding them to accomplish the contemplated revolution. He was, therefore, admitted to their counsels, and received as an intimate friend into their family, where he fondled the children, whom he was then labouring effectually and fatally to reduce to orphanage, poverty, and infamy, by bringing their father to the gallows! As soon as these two eminent barristers, universally esteemed in all the relations of life, were caught in his toils, he visited them in prison, professing the greatest possible grief at their condition, and proposing, as a friend, that if they had any papers, which they thought might criminate them, they had better give *him* their keys, and he would remove the dangerous documents! Such were the chosen, honoured, and well-rewarded agents of the government in these days; and by such means they compassed the destruction of their political opponents.

Lord Castlereagh did not hesitate to assert in Parliament in 1801, that "torture never was inflicted in Ireland with the knowledge, authority or approbation of government;"—an assertion very hard to believe when it is known that they had their spies in every hamlet, and almost in every family, so that nothing could transpire unknown to them, in the remotest part of the kingdom. But J. C. Beresford, who selected a riding-school for the philanthropic purpose, said, "It was unmanly to deny torture, as it was notoriously practised." It was constantly inflicted in the Royal Exchange, adjoining the Castle, when the shrieks of the agonised victims could be heard in the Council Chamber! Lord Clare, more candid than Lord Castlereagh, defended the barbarous practice, on the ground of necessity; and Sir Richard Musgrave, who could speak from experience on the subject, having once inflicted it in Waterford with his own hand, because he could find no person base enough to do it, has devoted a portion of his

History of the Rebellion to the vindication of this foul blot on British civilization. The government did not, indeed, give direct orders to obtain evidence in this manner. They were too politic for that; but Beresford, Musgrave, Judkin Fitzgerald, Hunter Gowan, Hawtrey White, Hamilton Boyd, Sandys, with Hempenstal, and Love (the famous walking gallows), who distinguished themselves in this line, were amply rewarded. Fitzgerald was made a baronet, Musgrave got an office of £1,200 a year, Gowan was put on the pension list, and the rest were recompensed in proportion to their "zeal beyond the law."

The tormentors of Ireland did not confine themselves to scourging, picketing, and pitch-capping. As the ordinary tribunals were superseded by martial law, military murders followed one another with awful rapidity, and were perpetrated amid circumstances of unheard of barbarity. Now was their time to force on the rebellion; the leaders of the people were imprisoned or dead. Crowds of victims were suffocating in the gaols. The country was in a state of consternation, paralyzed and hopeless. At last the unorganized county of Wexford was driven to desperation. Maddened by torture, they rose in self-defence, and then commenced the rebellion, an insurrection of a poor trodden-down peasantry in a single county, without officers, discipline, or fire-arms; and yet they won several victories over the king's forces; it took eight generals, and an immense army to subdue them; and had only a fourth of the 32 counties, followed the example of Wexford, the power of England would have been utterly destroyed in this country, without the aid of a single French soldier, notwithstanding the ignorance and intemperance, the want of moral discipline and self-control which then prevailed!

In truth, in thus tampering with rebellion, the government were playing a most perilous game. They put the institutions of the country to a fearful hazard. It was head or harp for the crown of Ireland. Besides, were it not for adverse winds, "the only unsubsidized allies of England," 15,000 Frenchmen, with 40,000 stand of arms, would have been landed on our shores. Mr. Moore has justly remarked that had steam boats been then in use, the French would have been masters of Ireland. They would have been followed by an immense native force to the metropolis, where, according to Lord Edward Fitzgerald's hint, the very women would have fought with the paving stones of the streets, from the roofs of the houses.

In allusion to another expedition in 1798, under General Humbert, Plowden makes the following remarks:—"It must ever remain a humiliating stain upon the lustre and power of the British arms, that

so pitiful a detachment as 1,100 French infantry, should, in a kingdom in which there was an armed force of 150,000 men, have not only put to rout a select army of 6,000, prepared to resist the invaders, but have also provided themselves with ordnance and ammunition from our stores, taken several of our towns, marched 122 Irish miles through the country, and kept arms in their victorious hands for 17 days, in the heart of an armed kingdom."

We do not palliate—we execrate—the atrocities perpetrated by the Wexford insurgents, especially at Wexford-bridge, and Scullabogue. But, in condemning them, we should recollect that they were an ignorant and ungoverned peasantry, infuriated by torture, and by cruelty in every form, of which their worst deeds were but a bad imitation. Several clergymen escaped from the hands of the rebels, but not one priest from those of the loyalists. Many Catholics exerted themselves to save Protestant life—so much the worse for themselves, for their treason was measured by their humanity. If a man prevailed with the rebels to spare their prisoners—it was a proof that he had influence, perhaps authority as a commander. Therefore he ought to die! So reasoned the men of '98. According to this rule one man is related by the Rev. James Gordon to have said—"I thank God no one can accuse me of having saved any man's life!" The same truly impartial historian, (himself a clergyman of the established church) declares that of the 30,000 natives slain during this war, more were killed in cold blood than fell in battle. "*No quarter*" says he, "was given to persons taken prisoners as rebels, with or *without arms*."\*

Sir John Moore, who relinquished his command here in disgust, said the country would "certainly be quiet if the gentry and yeomanry would behave with tolerable decency, and not seek to gratify their ill-humour and revenge on the people." The venerable Abercrombie—"that soul of honour, that star of England's glory," declared that the army which then scourged Ireland, with their savage licentiousness, "were formidable to every one but the enemy."

It may be asked why the use of torture in Ireland did not rouse the indignation of England, and cause the barbarians, who by its employment disgraced the British, and the Protestant name, to be hurled from power? Surely the voice of thunder awakened in England against such practices, when the distant *Negro* and the *Jew* were the victims, could not be silent when the bloody work was executed on the neighbouring people of Ireland, under a government for whose conduct their fellow-subjects in Great Britain were *responsible*! Alas!

\* Gordon's History of the Rebellion, p. 269.



it could ; for there lives not in any clime a people of any creed or colour, more thoroughly alienated from British sympathies than the Irish !

However that may be, the bloody experiment was now to be turned to its political uses. "The deprivation of all legal protection to liberty or life—the familiar use of torture—the trials by courts-martial—the forcible suppression of public meetings—the total stifling of public opinion—and the use of armed violence," prepared the way for the Union.

In the debate in 1800, Grattan said :—"I think now as I thought then, (1798,) that the treason of the minister against the liberties of the people, was infinitely worse than the treason of the people against the minister." The Lord Chancellor Plunket, one of the first of orators and greatest of constitutional lawyers, on that occasion boldly accused the government, "of fomenting the embers of a lingering rebellion—of hallooing the Protestant against the Catholic, and the Catholic against the Protestant—of artfully keeping alive domestic dissensions for the purpose of subjugation."

"I will be bold to say," he added, "that licentious and impious France, in all the unrestrained excesses that anarchy and atheism have given birth to, has not committed a more insidious act against her enemy than is now attempted by the professed champions of civilized Europe, against Ireland—a friend and ally—even in the hour of her calamity and distress. At a moment when our country is filled with British troops—whilst the Habeas Corpus Act is suspended—whilst trials by courts-martial are carrying on in many parts of the kingdom—whilst the people are made to believe that they have no right to meet and to deliberate—and whilst the people are palsied by their fears—at the moment when we are distracted by internal dissensions—dissensions kept alive as the pretext of our subjugation, and the instrument of our future thralldom. Such is the time in which the Union is proposed !"

My object in referring to the Rebellion is not to awaken party feeling, but rather a salutary horror of civil war ; and to show that it was "got up" by a wicked government to enable them to carry the Union. This, I trust, has been sufficiently proved. So far the object was gained. But there was another difficulty to be overcome. The people were prostrated—but the parliament was still to be purchased. This achievement we shall notice in the next section.

## SECTION II.—BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION.

MUCH has been said of the alleged corruption of the Irish Parliament—but in ignorance of the facts of the case. Those who know them will admit the truth of the following statement, by Sir Jonah Barrington :—“ It was the very summit of British egotism and injustice to pretend that the corrupt state of the Irish Parliament formed a leading and just ground for altogether extinguishing its existence, though it appears in full proof, that in proportion to their respective numbers, the British commons, at the period of the Irish Union, contained one-fourth more corrupt, corruptible and influenced members than that of Ireland at any period, and that the British minister, on the Regency question, intimidated, influenced, or corrupted the British House of Commons, when that of Ireland was found pure enough to resist all his efforts and support the heir apparent.”\* Indeed, it may be asserted truly, that the Irish commons, when the English government began to ply its arts of seduction, was incomparably purer and more independent than the *present* British Parliament, whose subserviency to Sir Robert Peel was so scandalous during the last session.

With a third of the money paid for Irish rotten boroughs alone, that right honourable gentleman can, if he pleases, purchase an overwhelming majority next session in favour of a Repeal of the Union !

But surely if it be infamous to receive a bribe, it must be equally infamous to give it ; and the tempter cannot be less guilty than his victim ! We have Mr. Grattan’s authority for the fact, that Lord Castlereagh openly declared in the House of Commons, that “ half a million or more were expended some years ago to break an opposition—the same or a greater sum may be necessary now.” Mr. Grattan added :—“ He said so in the most extensive sense of bribery and corruption. The threat was proceeded on ; the peerage sold ; the caitiffs of corruption were every where—in the lobby—in the street—on the steps—and at the doors of every parliamentary leader, offering title to some, offices to others, corruption to all.”

The late Lord Chief Justice Bushe denounced this wholesale corruption no less vehemently. He stated that “ the basest corruption and artifice were exerted to promote it (the Union) ; that all the worst passions of the human heart were entered into the service—and all

\* Rise and Fall of the Irish Nation, p. 538.—Duffy’s edition.

the most depraved ingenuity of the human intellect was tortured to devise new contrivances of fraud."

"The minister," says Mr. O'Connell, "set about purchasing votes. He opened his office with full hands. The *peerage* was part of his stock in trade, and he made some two scores of peers in exchange for Union votes! The *episcopal bench* was brought into the market, and ten or twelve bishoprics were trucked for Union votes! The bench of justice became a commodity, and a Chief Justice and eight puisne judges and barons ascended the bench, as the price of votes for the Union! It would extend beyond our calculation to make out a list of the generals, and admirals, and colonels, and navy captains, and other naval and military promotions which rewarded personal or kindred votes for the Union. The *revenue* departments have long, too, been the notorious merchandize of corruption. It is not surprising, therefore, that the board of excise and customs, either conjointly or separately, and the multifarious other fiscal offices, especially the legal offices, were filled to suffocation, as the rewards of Union votes. The price of a single vote was familiarly known—it was £8000, or a civil or military appointment to the value of £2000 per annum. They were simpletons who only took one of the three, the dexterous always managed to get at least two out of the three; and it would not be difficult, perhaps, to mention the names of twelve, or even a score of members, who contrived to obtain the entire three—the £8000, the civil appointment, and the military appointment."\*

Considering the frailty of human nature, can we wonder that these splendid baits took, especially in a country so poor as Ireland? Yet the English people, "from a recurrence to unequivocal facts, and from a sad experience of the infinite ease with which any minister corrupted and controlled, at pleasure, their own parliament, will scarcely believe that all the arts, the money, the titles, the offices, the bribes, their minister could bestow—all the influence he possessed—all the patronage he could grant—all the promises he could make—all the threats he could use—all the terrors he could excite—all the deprivations he could inflict, could seduce or warp scarcely more than a half of the members of the Irish Commons from their duty to their country; and that on the question of annexation by union, his utmost efforts could not influence more than eight above a moiety of their number; yet with only 158 out of 300, which in England would be considered a defeat, he persevered and effected

\* Repeal Reports, 1840.



the extinguishment of the legislature—a majority, which on any important question would have cashiered a British minister. Yet such was the fact in Ireland; and the division of the 5th and 6th of February, 1800, on the Union, will remain an eternal record of *the unrivalled incorruptible purity of 115 members of that parliament.*”\*

Let it also be recollected that this parliament had been packed by means of the Place Bill; that consequently the majority consisted not of *bona fide* Irish representatives, but of officers and others thrust in merely to do this work, instead of persons who could not be induced to vote against their country, but accepted rewards on consideration of vacating their seats; and let it be also recollected, that this was an unreformed parliament, many of whose members were the nominees of peers. How vital then to the nation must have seemed the existence of parliament; and how faithful and devoted to the interests of this kingdom would be a House of Commons constitutionally returned, and fairly representing the people!

When Lord Castlereagh had, by means of his Place Bill, introduced into the house a sufficient number of dependants to balance all opposition, then he “boldly announced his intention to turn the scale by bribes to all who would accept them, under the name of *compensation* for loss of patronage and interest. He publicly declared, first, that every nobleman, who returned members to parliament, should be paid in cash £15,000 for every member so returned; secondly, that every member who had *purchased* a seat in parliament, should have his purchase-money repaid him by the treasury of Ireland; thirdly, that all members of parliament or others, who were losers by a union should be fully compensated for their losses; and that £1,500,000 should be devoted to this service: in other terms, all who supported his measure were under some pretence or other to share in this bank of corruption! “A declaration so flagitious and treasonable was never publicly made in any country; but it had a powerful effect in his favour; and, before the meeting of parliament, he had secured a small majority of eight.†

Lord Shannon received for his patronage in the

Commons	-	-	-	-	-	-	£45,000
The Marquis of Ely	-	-	-	-	-	-	45,000
Lord Clanmorris, besides a peerage	-	-	-	-	-	-	23,000
Lord Belvidere, besides his <i>douceur</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	15,000
Sir Hercules Langrishe	-	-	-	-	-	-	15,000

\* Sir Jonah Barrington's Rise and Fall of the Irish Nation, p. 538.

† Sir Jonah Barrington.

The total cost of the UNION has been estimated at the lowest rate as follows:—

Expenses of the large military force required on account of the preliminary Rebellion, at four millions per annum, from 1797 to 1802	- - -	£16,000,000
Purchase of the Irish Parliament	- - -	1,500,000
Payment to suffering Loyalists	- - -	1,500,000
Secret Service Money from 1797 to 1804	- - -	553,547
Pensions paid on account of the Rebellion and the Union, probably	- - - - -	1,000,000
Additional expenses in the public establishments, removing departments to London, and compensation to retiring officers	- - - - -	500,000
		<hr/>
		£21,053,547
		<hr/>

Add the destruction of property by the military, 50,000 human lives lost, and half a century of national degradation and poverty entailed on the country!

## CHAPTER X.

THE ACT OF UNION WAS NOT A CONSTITUTIONAL COMPACT BUT A  
LEGAL SPOILIATION.

“You may make the Union binding as a law, but you cannot make it obligatory on conscience. It will be obeyed as long as England is strong; but resistance to it will be in the abstract a duty: and the exhibition of that resistance will be a mere question of prudence.”—SAURIN.

WE are told over and over again by the English journals that the Union was a solemn compact between two great nations,—a mutual agreement voluntarily made, publicly ratified, and rendered sacredly binding throughout all ages. Is this the fact? Can any one who has the slightest acquaintance with the history of the transaction believe it for a moment? From the language generally held by British writers upon this subject, a person would be led to suppose that the Irish people had the same opinion of their parliament as the English Commons once had of Irish cattle, when they voted their importation “a common nuisance;”—that being regularly convened in their parishes, towns, and counties, they all but unanimously declared that the Irish constitution ought to be abolished, and that the ancient kingdom of Ireland should sink into a province of Great Britain!

If the country had been in a state of profound peace—if the minds of the people were undistracted with wars and rumours of wars—if the course of law ran smooth and tranquil—if life and liberty were safe under the regular constitutional guarantees—if the people could assemble freely to express their opinions, none daring to make them afraid—if the public press laboured under no intimidation—if the national mind had thoroughly recovered from the reign of terror—if conciliation had quenched the coals of party strife—and if, then, the question being fully discussed on the merits, the parliament had been dissolved, that the suffrages of the nation might be taken on the question of a union, so that a majority should be returned, pledged to their constituents to abolish the LEGISLATURE—why in that case there would be some truth in the statement, that the union was a compact binding on



the conscience as well as in law. We might lament the infatuation of our forefathers, in parting with their birthright, but still submit in patience to their bad bargain. But even, then, if a failure were shown—if the measure were proved to produce much more evil than good, there is no sound reason why it should not be reconsidered, and, if need be, rescinded.

But it is notorious that the very reverse of all this was the fact, and that in the circumstances of the case, a fair compact was as unlikely as between a wolf and a lamb, with none but other wolves to witness it. First the nation was disarmed, disabled and terror-stricken; and next its representatives were bribed, bullied and overcome by a system of combined seduction and coercion, whose enormity has never been paralleled in the history of the world.

An Irishman may be suspected of colouring the facts connected with this awful transaction. He may regard the murder of a constitution as not less culpable than the murder of a king, and as he gazes on the tomb of that constitution, associated with a thousand recollections of departed glory and prosperity, he may give vent to his emotions in language, not so moderate or measured as may seem fitting to those by whose hands his country's liberty was cloven down. Let us listen then to one of England's own most illustrious legislators, a man whose sterling principle was equal to his commanding intellect. No one can suspect him of so stating a question of this kind, as to do injustice to his own country, or his own order. The following are extracts from speeches made by Lord Grey, in the British Parliament, in the year 1800:—

“If the Parliament of Ireland was left to itself, untempted, unawed, unintimidated, it would, *without hesitation, have rejected the resolutions*. There are 300 members in all, and 120 of these strenuously opposed the measure, amongst whom were two-thirds of the county members, the representatives of the city of Dublin, and almost all the towns which it is proposed shall send members to the Imperial Parliament; 162 voted in favour of the union, of these 116 were *placemen*! some of whom were English generals on the staff, without a foot of ground in Ireland, and completely dependant upon government. \* \* \*

Let us reflect upon the arts which have been used since the last sessions of the Irish Parliament to pack a majority in the House of Commons. All persons holding offices under government, even the most intimate friends of the minister, if they hesitated to vote as directed, were stript of all their employments. Even this step was found ineffectual, and other arts were had recourse to, which, though I cannot name in this place, all will easily conjecture. A bill framed for pre-

serving the purity of parliament was likewise abused, and no less than sixty-three seats were vacated, by their holders having received nominal offices.

“Twenty-seven counties have petitioned against the measure (the Union). The petition from the county of Down, is signed by upwards of 17,000 respectable, independent men, and all the others are in a similar proportion. Dublin petitioned under the great seal of the city, and each of the corporations in it followed the example. Drogheda petitioned against the Union, and almost every other town in the kingdom, in like manner, testified its disapprobation. Those in favour of the measure, possessing great influence in the country, obtained a few counter petitions; yet though the petition from the county Down was signed by 17,000, the counter petition was signed only by 415. Though there were 707,000 who had signed petitions against the measure, the total number of those who declared themselves in favour of it, did not exceed 3,000, and many even of these only prayed that the measure might be *discussed*! If the facts I state are true—and *I challenge any man to falsify them*—could a nation in more direct terms express its disapprobation of a political measure, than Ireland has of a legislative Union with Great Britain? In fact the nation is nearly unanimous, and this great majority is composed not of fanatics, bigots, or jacobins, but of the most respectable of every class in the community.”

Surely the *Morning Chronicle* will respect this authority!—If the editor were aware of these unquestionable facts, how could he reiterate the fiction that the Union was a fair compact, freely entered into, and solemnly ratified by two great nations, and which it is, therefore, criminal on the part of Ireland to attempt, however peacefully, to infringe? A large majority of the *bona fide* representatives stood firmly by their country against all the arts of the government—and the measure was ultimately carried by the members for rotten boroughs, by placemen, soldiers and strangers. And such was the feeling of the country against the suicidal act, that all the Londonderry influence in the county Down could not induce more than one out of every thirty-four of the petitioners, to pray that it might be inflicted on their country! Is it not hard then to keep one's patience, when men who ought to know better, represent the Union as a fair bargain to be held for ever sacred? There must be some strange obliquity in the conscience that can regard it as imposing a particle of moral obligation on Ireland.

But we will suppose a case far more favourable to our opponents: we will grant, for argument sake, that the whole proceedings were

reversed—that no foul arts were used to intimidate or corrupt—and that a majority of parliament, acting freely and honestly according to their best judgment, gave their votes for the Union. Would it be constitutionally binding then? Not a jot more than it is now! It would not, it is true, be so execrable, so flagrant a violation of every political right and moral principle—so deep a stain on England's policy—so memorable an instance of doing the direst evil, on the widest scale, with a giant's energy and a demon's hardihood, for the sake of some problematical good—flooding the island with corruption in the idle hope of reaping therefrom a crop of social virtue and national prosperity! But still it would be a nullity as really in this supposed case as it was and is in the other.

The Irish constitution, consisting of King, Lords, and Commons, was as old as that of England. What right had any or all of the functionaries of this constitution to destroy it? Kings may die, dynasties may change; but the crown remains, and the throne waits to be filled again by the immortal virtue of the constitution. What right had the representatives of the people at any particular time to take away the crown of Ireland—to denationalize a country of whose rights they were the sworn guardians? Who authorised the Commons to allow one-third of their number to be absorbed in an alien and unfriendly legislature, while the remaining two-thirds not only abdicated, but assisted in abolishing their proper functions? Was it competent for the peers of Parliament to denude themselves and their posterity of their legislative rights? And should the king have lent his hand to level the Corinthian pillars of the Irish state?

Parliament may make laws, alter, repeal, or renew them at pleasure; it can reform itself, change the executive, and alter the succession of the crown; but it cannot abolish the kingly office; it cannot disband the peers—it cannot destroy itself. Or if in its assumed omnipotence it do so, then society is dissolved into its elements, and the PEOPLE, the source, under God, of all legitimate power, must frame for themselves another constitution.

I am writing, I feel, what would be regarded in England as mere truisms. If the British Parliament at its next meeting were recommended by Sir Robert Peel to consider the expediency of a union of that kingdom with France; and if, by undue influence of every kind, he whipped his spaniel-majority into acquiescence; if the lords and bishops, too, were bought over; and if the queen were traitorously persuaded to give her royal assent to the act of union, what would the people of England do? Would they endure to be told by their journals that this was a solemn compact between two great nations,



effected by the wisdom of their respective parliaments, and that its terms were, therefore, morally and legally binding on Englishmen throughout all generations, during which they must quietly and dutifully submit to French ascendancy, being the smaller nation, and withal only a few leagues from the land which is the seat of supremacy and centralization, a space all but annihilated by steam-boats and rail-roads?

But I need not dwell longer on a principle which has been enforced with such splendour of eloquence and irresistible logic by the very highest authority that could be quoted on such a subject, namely, the Lord Chancellor PLUNKET, who spoke in the Irish Commons as follows :—

“ I, in the most express terms, deny the competency of parliament to do this act. I warn you, do not dare to lay your hands on the constitution. I tell you, if, circumstanced as you are, you pass this act, it will be a NULLITY, and that no man in Ireland will be bound to obey it. I make this assertion deliberately. I repeat it; and call on any man who hears me to take down my words. You have not been elected for this purpose. You have been appointed to make *laws*, not *legislatures*. You are appointed to act under the constitution, not to destroy it. You are appointed to exercise the functions of legislators, and not to transfer them; and if you do, your act is a dissolution of the government; you resolve society into its original elements, and no man in the land is bound to obey you. \* \* \* Yourselves you may extinguish; but parliament you cannot extinguish! It is enshrined in the hearts of the people—it is enshrined in the sanctuary of the constitution—it is immortal as the island it protects. As well might the fanatic maniac hope that the act which destroys his miserable body, should extinguish his eternal soul. Again, therefore, I warn you, do not dare to lay your hands on the constitution; it is above your power.”

## CHAPTER XI.

## EVILS INFLICTED BY THE UNION.

“ The loss of national independence is, no doubt, the worst of all calamities.”—  
EDINBURGH REVIEW.

I. HAD the promises of the Union been honestly made and faithfully redeemed, no doubt much less evil would have resulted from it. Had the Catholics been emancipated, the franchise extended, the people educated, and the industrial resources of the country developed, much discontent, misery, and coercion would have been spared. Imperial legislation might have opened up many a profitable channel for English capital in Ireland. And if a disarmed and subjugated people mourned in the presence of frowning British garrisons, that they “knew the use of steel no longer;” degraded because distrusted, conscious of loyalty and guarded like convicted rebels; still they might console themselves, while busy “gathering gold,” and enriching their families, for the loss of independence. The livery of the slave might have been embroidered; he might have received from an indulgent master at least an abundant supply of pudding, and, brought to a state of fat content, might have fallen into a happy oblivion of his lost rights.

A wise despotism would seek to mitigate its bondage—to increase material civilization and mere animal comfort, thereby blunting the feeling of national degradation. But in Ireland the slave is hungry, and naked, and unprotected; his galled wounds are bare, and excite only the derision of his driver; he labours without motive or hope, for his industry knows no fostering care of government. Capital can never be his, for as soon as the least dripping is pressed out of the soil it is drained off to enrich another people. Instead, therefore, of trying to compensate for the loss of political rights with all their ennobling influences, everything seems to have been studiously done to add bitterness to bondage—to make the chains galling and the yoke crushing. Whether it proceed from the imperious blood of a dominant race, inflamed by the inveterate animosity of conquest, and poisoned by the

virus of religious bigotry, on the one hand, or the innate servility and tameness of hereditary bondsmen on the other; or from repeated triumphs over partial, feeble, and irritating efforts at freedom; certain it is, that no people in Europe, however devoid of constitutional privileges, have experienced less of kindly feeling from their government than the Irish.

Nothing but the grossest ignorance or neglect of the lessons of history could have rendered the men who advocated the Union blind to this result, if, indeed, any of them were blind to it. One of the first of British historians, speaking of the nations subjugated by Rome, has the following remarks—how applicable to Ireland! No doubt the Romans brought with their arms the boasted blessings of civilization, said to follow in the train of conquest, and to counterbalance its calamities—a monstrous falsehood invented by lying and flattering historians:—

“Europe began to breathe and to recover strength,” says Dr. Robertson, “after the calamities it had undergone; agriculture was encouraged; population increased; the ruined cities were rebuilt; new towns were founded; an appearance of prosperity succeeded, and repaired in some degree the havoc of war.

“This state, however, was far from being happy or favourable to the improvement of the human mind. The vanquished natives were disarmed by their conquerors, and overawed by soldiers kept in pay to restrain them. They were given up as a prey to rapacious governors, who plundered them with impunity; and were drained of their wealth by exorbitant taxes, levied with so little attention to the situation of the provinces, that the impositions were often increased in proportion to their inability to pay them. They were deprived of their most enterprising citizens, who resorted to a distant capital in quest of preferment, or of riches; and were accustomed in all their actions to look up to a superior, and tamely receive his commands. Under so many depressing circumstances, it was hardly possible that they could retain vigour or generosity of mind. The martial and independent spirit, which distinguished their ancestors, became, in a great measure, extinct among all the people subject to the Roman yoke, and they lost not only the habit, but even the capacity of deciding for themselves, or of acting from the impulse of their own minds; and the dominion of the Romans, like that of all great empires, degraded and debased the human species!”

To the Barbarians of the North, the Roman name was synonymous with whatever was base, avaricious, luxurious, false, and vicious.—“The consternation of the Britons, when invaded by the Picts and



Caledonians after the Roman legions were called out of the island, may give some idea of the degree of debasement to which the human mind was reduced by long servitude under the Romans. In their supplicatory letter to Ætius, which they call the *Groans of Britain*, ‘We know not,’ say they, ‘which way to turn us. The barbarians drive us to the sea, and the sea forces us back on the barbarians; between which we have only the choice of two deaths, either to be swallowed up by the waves, or to be slain by the sword!’ One can hardly believe, (adds Robertson,) this dastardly race to be the descendants of that gallant people, who repulsed Cæsar and defended their liberty so long against the Roman army.”\*

Is this the kind of civilization for which we are to be grateful to Britain? Is this the imperial glory in which we are invited to partake in exchange for our virtuous and noble nationality? Can men who read history wonder that the Irish, after seven centuries of subjugation to a “great Empire,” are not as self-relying and independent in mind as those to whom they have been accustomed “to look up and tamely receive their commands,” at the peril of plunder, imprisonment, torture, or death? But it may be replied that this fact—this ingrained servility is a reason why the Irish should not be intrusted with self-government. To this I answer: this fatal brand is almost worn out by the gradual acquisition and exercise of civil and political rights—and if it were not so, we should still insist on freedom as the only and all-sufficient remedy. On this subject listen to an eloquent Whig writer, Macauley:—

“Many politicians of our time are in the habit of laying it down as a self-evident proposition, that no people ought to be free till they are fit to use their freedom. The maxim is worthy of the fool in the old story, who resolved not to go into the water till he had learned to swim! If men are to wait for liberty till they become wise and good in slavery, they may indeed wait for ever.”

It has been the fashion, too, to magnify the evils of popular commotion, and to hold up the ringleaders of revolt to everlasting infamy, which would certainly be merited, if any other mode of redress were possible. But while the excesses of nations struggling for existence are thus execrated, the dying groans of the victims of despotism, perishing in secret dungeons, or on the scaffold, find neither echo nor record, and the cold-blooded victimizer of innocent men enjoys his crown in peace and honour. Even Nicholas of Russia was fêted in England, and flattered by the liberal press. The judgment of the

\* Works, vol. iii., p. 10.

splendid writer just quoted is however different. In his review of Milton's public conduct he says :—

“ If it were possible that a people brought up under an intolerant and arbitrary system could subvert that system without acts of cruelty and folly, half the objections to despotic power would be removed. We should, in that case, be compelled to acknowledge, that it at least produces no pernicious effects on the intellectual and moral character of a people. We deplore the outrages which accompany revolutions. But the more violent the outrages, the more assured we feel that *a revolution was necessary*. The violence of those outrages will always be proportioned to the ferocity and ignorance of the people : and the ferocity and ignorance of the people will be proportioned to the oppression and degradation in which they have been accustomed to live. Thus it was in our civil war (in England). The rulers in the church and state reaped only that which they had sown. They had prohibited free discussion : they had done their best to keep the people unacquainted with their duties and their rights. The retribution was just and natural. If they suffered from popular ignorance, it was because they had themselves taken away the key of knowledge. If they were assailed with blind fury, it was because they had exacted an equally blind submission. \* \* \* Many evils, no doubt, *were* produced by the civil war. They were the price of our liberty. Has the acquisition been worth the sacrifice ? *It is the nature of the devil of tyranny to tear and rend the body which he leaves. Are the miseries of continual possession less horrible than the struggles of the tremendous exorcism ?*”

Thank God, *we* are spared the struggles of such tremendous exorcism ! The leader of the Irish people has found a holy and a bloodless spell, by which the demons of Irish tyranny go out quietly one by one, emancipating the serf without the slightest injury to his lord. Ireland has now learned to prize freedom so well, that, in a few years more, she would purchase it at any cost ! The people are beginning to feel that the consciousness of independence is itself happiness. The noble occupations it affords, and the importance it confers, at once excite the intellect and elevate the spirit. It stimulates and sustains industry, promotes prosperity, and secures wealth. It nurtures mental and moral, as well as physical bravery—opens up a boundless field for generous emulation—and crowns genius with the garlands of national honour, which are its most coveted and most inspiring rewards. It makes men patient, persevering, and public-spirited. “ No slaves could have undergone the toils to which the Spartans or the Romans taxed themselves for the good or the glory of their country ; and no

tyrant could ever have extorted the sums in which the Commons of England voluntarily assessed themselves for the exigencies of the state."

Surely there is an energy in independence—in the self-taxed power of freedom, unknown to the coerced subjects of another state. Of this fact history abounds with illustrations. Not to refer to the ancient republics of Greece and Rome, let us turn to modern Europe. Cast your eyes on the glorious Italian republics—their stern independence, their vigorous self-government, their wise confederation, their unrivalled civilization, their magnificent architecture, their brilliant literature, their enterprize and prosperity. What made the vast difference between Venice and Dublin or Cork? Was it not their institutions? Was it not the force of "that proud and singular democracy, which with progressive modifications, and through sanguinary vicissitudes subsisted in the republic for nearly a thousand years," from the fourth century to its subversion by the aristocracy in the beginning of the fourteenth?

In Switzerland, "a petty population," says Müller, "without allies, munitions, or money—without state-craft—without military skill, save that which nature taught, could maintain itself in possession of its primitive rights and usages through all the European revolutions of five centuries." Yes, this petty population of some million of people, composed of little republics, each of which fought out its own independence, joined together in a defensive confederation, through the indomitable heroism, which only freedom can inspire, defied the enormous armies and haughty chivalry of the German empire, and drove them again and again from their glorious mountains, vanquished, dishonoured, and despoiled! "A century after the Austrian pride and arrogance had commenced the war against the freedom of Switzerland, when the latter had come triumphantly out of the conflict, Duke Frederick was glad to conclude a peace on any terms."

And while history records these things of such a people, shall she add, that IRELAND, with a population five times more numerous, and resources so vastly superior, not only suffered her constitution to be extinguished by a neighbouring kingdom—a "sister," sworn to maintain it; but for ever after tamely endured the privation? No!—By all that is heart-stirring in the struggles of patriotism, she shall not always have to drop a tear on so disgraceful a record!

Look, again, at the Netherlands, where an industrious, enterprising, and patient people, reclaimed a territory from the ocean, which they dyked out, cultivating their land to the highest pitch of productiveness, rising to wealth and power by commerce, and at length covering



the seas with their triumphant and richly-fraught navies, and taking their place exultingly among the mightiest nations of Europe. What would they have been as a mere province under the haughty sway of despotic Spain, whose cunning and vindictive tyrant, Philip II., laboured with diabolical ingenuity to extinguish their liberties? But they magnanimously resisted and conquered. Such was their hatred of oppression, that, at one time, when the cause was so low that all seemed lost, their noble leader, William, Prince of Orange, had actually determined to break up the dykes, and give back the country (with all its populous cities and its wealth) to the dominion of the ocean, rather than it should be cursed with Spanish tyranny.

These countries, unfavourably as they were circumstanced, satisfied the ambition of their people. They sought no glory that did not belong to their respective lands. The highest theatres they aspired to were their own free and sovereign councils, and their most precious rewards were the honours conferred by their fellow-citizens. The great men of Switzerland did not go fawning for preferment at the imperial court, where they might easily have got it for betraying the liberties of their native land. Nor did those of Holland think of travelling to Madrid, to pay sycophantic homage to a tyrant, that they might be permitted to play some profitable part against national independence. If they had, the tears of sympathy would not flow as they now do over the pages of their thrilling history! No, unlike many unworthy Irishmen, they regarded such conduct as infamous.

But, unfortunate Poland, with an enthusiasm for liberty, if possible, nobler and more romantic, and a courage no less perfect, was doomed to a harder destiny. Yet what prodigies of valour their intense love of country enabled her people to achieve! "History will record for the consolation of freemen in future ages, that the invincible ardour of troops, half-armed and newly raised, and scarcely at all disciplined, beat the veteran forces of Catherine and Frederick, never less than thrice their numbers, in many fierce engagements." Thank God for such victories! If they have not availed for those that won them, they will at least deter and restrain the projectors of massacres in other lands, and fan the flame of liberty wherever their story is told.

History, we are told, is philosophy teaching by examples. We shall now, therefore, refer to the example of a nation rapidly regenerated by the efforts of a single patriot, and if his noble work was afterwards crushed, it serves at least to show the darkness of despotism deeper and more diabolical.

"Prussia was now placed in a situation, doubtless the most desperate

to which a state can be reduced. To dependence and oppression from without, were superadded internal infirmity which seemed incurable, and the vigilance of a rapacious enemy (Napoleon) armed with overwhelming power. In this situation of affairs, the minister, Von Stein, seized the helm of the state. He was undoubtedly one of the greatest ministers of modern times. \* \* \* Disdaining the aristocracy, which had ruined the state, he applied to the nation for its relief.—The two grand and intimately connected objects of his administration, were to deliver his country from foreign oppression, and to create a liberal constitution. He formed a plan for rousing it to a sense of its dignity, by freeing it from the degrading domination of the aristocracy—for inspiring it with national feelings and patriotism, by admitting it to a share in the public councils, leaving to each community the management of its own concerns ; and for creating by those means a mental power in the whole body of the people, which, on a proper occasion, whenever fate should afford it, might be able to break her fetters, and vanquish the oppressor.

“The Prussian minister also directed his views to the military department—to create a national militia. The system of Von Stein tended to develop the moral force of the nation, by the energy inherent in all liberal institutions. The execution of the plan, therefore, required everywhere men of talent, and elevated minds, and Stein himself took pains to seek them. \* \* \* Convinced of the powerful influence which mental culture must have on the promotion of such designs, he paid great attention to that object. By him, and by his party, the universities of Berlin and Breslau, and, at a later period, that of Bonn, were established ; and the whole scheme of education, and of public instruction, was directed to the development of national feelings. By the combination of all these means, the kingdom was soon animated with a spirit unexampled, perhaps, in any modern community. Instead of a corrupt aristocracy, **THE NATION** itself rose up in the full energy of every faculty that can render the sense of oppression bitter, and the purpose of redress irresistible!

“In the year 1813, the astonishing results prepared by the activity of Stein, announced a regenerated people. The vast scheme of universal armament (*Landwehr*)—the spontaneous contributions supplied to the impoverished state by all classes—the enthusiasm with which every order and condition answered the call to arms—the unequalled courage of the soldiery in general, but especially of the regiments of the *Landwehr*, charging hostile batteries with the bayonet—the heroism of the volunteer corps, composed mostly of *highly educated youths*, who, like Spartans, regarded their country as everything, and

danger and death as nothing, and whose exploits are immortalised among the Germans by the songs of Theodore Komer : these are phenomena almost unexampled in modern history.”\*

Imagine for a moment how different would have been the destiny of Ireland if Lord Castlereagh had been a Von Stein ! Shame upon the government that labours with jealous and mistrustful policy to keep down the people ! to seal up the fountain of nationality—the well-spring of manly virtue, giving health and power to the highest intellectual faculties, imparting energy and purity to the best affections, filling the nation with an atmosphere of loyalty, and surrounding the throne with a halo of genuine glory. Were monarchs wise, how greatly would they prefer this to the mocking phantom that lifts its lurid form above smoke and carnage on the field of conquest, or to the phosphor-loyalty that gleams on the stagnant surface of political corruption !

How much more strength would the throne of these realms gain—how much more weight in the balance of European power—having Ireland free and happy, than, as she is, garrisoned with English and Scotch soldiers ! Had England not treated the Irish as an inferior race—had she not denied them the privilege of bearing arms—“the proudest badge of freedom and its only security,”—had the Irish Volunteers been established as a permanent national militia, the Catholics being emancipated and embraced as brothers in the military organization—had Reform and Free Trade been granted at their request, leaving Parliament unfettered to develop the resources of the country, to educate its people, concentrate its energies, and foster its industry—then England need never have faltered in her diplomacy at the mention of the word “Ireland”—which now excites so lively an interest in every court of Europe, as well as in the new world. Then the horrid Rebellion would have been spared, and O’CONNELL would have been presiding for the last twenty years over the Irish peers, as Lord High Chancellor of one of the most peaceful, united, loyal, and prosperous kingdoms on the face of the earth.

Then our most enterprising citizens, our men of talent and genius would not have to seek their fortune in another kingdom, where they learn to despise the land of their fathers, and insensibly imbibe sentiments by which they are denationalised. They go away in despondency or disgust from an impoverished and divided province, in which nothing flourishes so much as the bigotry that weakens and degrades it. Unable in any way to act as a nation—ruled by

\* Edinburgh Review, August, 1825.



strangers, from the viceroy to the tax-gatherer—every man in office alienated in heart from the people—without a parliament or a native court—without popular institutions or a national literature—obliged to export every thing that labour can produce, to pay for the bare liberty to live miserably on the soil; how can Ireland expect to retain talent, and genius, and learning at home, to render her name illustrious? But England, who enjoys nearly all Ireland's money, can easily confer offices and honours, and send missions and armies to distant nations; and if an Irishman, by getting rid of his Irishism, should now and then rise to her confidence and favour, then of course, if he be distinguished on the field or in the council, (as in the late Chinese war,) his mistress reaps all the glory as well as the gain, and *his* country is never mentioned.

Ireland cannot stir without orders from her keepers; she can originate nothing with public authority for her own good or her own honour. Let her leading men of all parties unite for such an object, and for this very reason it will be resisted by the English minister. The publication of the Ordnance Survey is a case in point. Nay, if it be possible to prevent it by the technical twisting of an act of parliament, an Irish Board will not be suffered to appoint or dismiss its own clerk! Our nobility, our gentry, and our merchants must look with folded arms on the decay and misery, the wasting resources and unprofitable labour that everywhere surround them; or, more provoking still, on the blundering experiments of ignorant and conceited strangers, who, while loading the nation with taxes, treat the wishes and suggestions of the most respectable natives with contemptuous neglect. It matters not who or what these natives are, whether Protestants or Catholics, lords or people, clergy or laity, all come in for the same measure of impartial insolence. It is the same in parliament. As if to demonstrate that our representation there is a mockery, it is on *Irish* questions, where Irish members are nearly unanimous, that they are most pointedly made to feel their utter insignificance.

Surely this is a condition calculated most effectually to degrade the human mind! Is it possible it can be borne much longer? Will two millions of Irish Protestants, equal to the whole population of Switzerland and its dependencies, and kindred in their free and independent spirit to the brave compatriots of William of Orange, in Holland; will *they* not yield to the patriotic indignation now struggling for utterance, and say—"We will not endure this degradation any longer!" May the blessings of posterity rest upon the men, who shall manfully and constitutionally undo the work—the

bloody, treasonable, infamous work of Clare and Castlereagh! It would be impossible for human imagination to conceive the enormity of their wickedness, if they had known what they were doing! If they had known that in destroying the Irish Parliament, they were burying in its ruins the liberty and prosperity of their country, and inflicting on it *the worst of all calamities*—the loss of NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE. When the Americans began to fight for this glorious inheritance, their population was under three millions, without artillery, arsenals, or magazines. But, with a good cause, popular enthusiasm, able and virtuous leaders, they fought for their hearths and homes, with wives, children, and friends cheering them on—they fought and conquered—and see what they are now! Let England reflect that she spent one hundred millions sterling, and some 50,000 lives in this mad crusade against liberty—all in vain, and beware how she *drives* Ireland to extremities.

II. Seeing that Ireland lost by the Union what no imperial advantages could ever possibly repay, it were not to be wondered at if an effort had been made to console her wounded spirit for the irreparable injury by giving her a larger amount of representation in parliament, and a more extended franchise than Britain enjoys. As far as England is concerned this would be but reasonable. One member dwelling in the ruling kingdom has naturally more influence with government than five from the dependant province. Ought not the weaker country to have some countervailing power to check the undue preponderance of national interest and prejudice ever accumulating at the seat of authority? This would seem to be only a fair arrangement, if the province had never been a kingdom—had never been robbed of its own parliament, or enjoyed a parliament to be robbed of. At all events the least that, in such a case, could in decency be offered, would be a full equality in representation and franchise, in proportion to the population and other elements on which they are founded. But how stand the facts?

According to a report drawn up by Daniel O'Connell, Esq., M. P., in April 1840, we find that Ireland has been denied at least one-third of her due number of representatives. If the arrangements of the Union had been made on equitable principles, we should have had 169 members instead of 100. The injustice thus inflicted was the more readily acquiesced in, because, as we have seen, members were not only paid for giving their votes and vacating their seats, but the patrons of boroughs received each £15,000.

Indeed, our representation, as compared with that of Britain, is shamefully inadequate. Wales, for instance, has twenty-eight members,

while Cork has only eight, whereas if numbers, property, and revenue, the main elements of representation, be fairly estimated, Cork would have twenty members and Wales only sixteen.

The disproportion in the number of electors is still greater, and the landlords seem determined to diminish them to a very manageable quantity. The statistics, however, connected with this subject I willingly leave in better hands. The subject has been most ably treated in the speech of Mr. Smith O'Brien in parliament, and by Mr. O'Connell repeatedly.

III. By the act of Union Ireland was protected from any liability for the national debt of England previously contracted, until the debts of both nations should be cleared off; or, (as this was not to be expected for many an age) till they should bear to each other the relation of 15 to 2; or, till the circumstances of both countries should admit of uniform taxation.

THE PRINCIPLE OF ADJUSTMENT was expounded by Lord Castle-reagh, February 5th, 1800, as follows :—

“ In respect to *past* expenses, Ireland was to have no concern whatever with the debt of Great Britain; but the two countries were to unite in future expenses, on a strict measure of *relative ability*. \* \* \* Such was the disproportion of the debt of the two kingdoms that a common system was then impossible; nor could any system of equivalent, as in the case of Scotland, be applied for equalizing their contributions. It was, therefore, necessary that the debts of the two kingdoms should be kept distinct, and that, of course, their taxation should be separate and proportionate. \* \* \* The charges of the debt of Great Britain amount to £20,000,000, and the charges of the debt of Ireland to £1,300,000 British, a-year.”

Scotland had no debt at the time of the Union, in 1706; and for taking on her the liability of the English debt, then amounting to something more than £20,500,000, she got the sum of £398,085, as an “*equivalent*.” This was more than six times the amount of her whole customs and excise revenue at that period, and bore the proportion of one to fifty to the above stated English debt. According to these proportions, Ireland's equivalent, had such been given her at the Union, would have amounted to the sum of £10,497,976.\*

Nevertheless, the minister lauded the generosity and liberality of the terms granted to Ireland. “Great Britain,” said he, “holds out a fair participation in all the *advantages* of the empire, without requiring the smallest participation in the *burdens* incurred to procure

\* Mr. J. O'Connell's Argument for Ireland.



them; and Ireland will acquire £58,000 in ease of her own burdens, out of the money paid by the East India Company."

Alas! for the "fair participation in all the advantages of the empire," and the "perfect, incorporating, and equalizing Union!" We have now waited for them upwards of forty years in vain. "If," said Lord Castlereagh, "we wisely unite with Great Britain, the future charge of our war expenses will be diminished a million a-year, and we shall be able to support our peace expenditure with a very slight addition to our present taxes."

However, his estimate of the comparative fiscal ability of Ireland was condemned at the time as most unjust. Mr. Speaker Foster and others complained that there had been no commission of inquiry appointed to ascertain the real facts and bearings of a case so intricate, and involving permanent consequences so momentous. An excellent protest entered on the Journals of the House of Lords (vol. viii. p. 386) furnishes the following data for a more correct estimate:—

Balance of trade in favour of Great Britain—on her	
trade with the whole world, . . . . .	£14,800,000
Ditto, Ireland on her whole trade, . . . . .	599,312
which give a proportion of 29 to 1.	
Current cash in Great Britain, . . . . .	£43,000,950
Ditto, in Ireland, . . . . .	3,500,000
which give a proportion of 12 to 1.	

In another protest the following additional item is given:—

Permanent taxes of Great Britain, on the 5th January, 1799, were £26,000,000; for Ireland £2,000,000, or as 13 to 1.

The scale then was:—Balance of trade, . . . . . 29 to 1  
Current cash, . . . . . 12 to 1  
Permanent taxes, . . . . . 13 to 1

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Mean proportion that ought to have fixed the rate, . . 18 to 1

The lords who signed this protest adverted to other immense advantages enjoyed by England, which should have been taken into the account, such as the influx of wealth from the East and West Indies, and the absentee remittances from Ireland, draining away her capital and destroying her credit. Mr. Foster likewise showed that Lord Castlereagh omitted several most important items, without including which a just estimate of relative ability could not be formed. These were *internal commerce*, much greater than the external—the tonnage of the shipping belonging to each kingdom; salt, an article of general use, the gross duties on it the previous year amounting to £800,000 in Great Britain, while in Ireland they produced only £90,000; the

stamp duties also, a pretty fair criterion of fiscal ability, which amounted in the sister island to £2,000,000, and in Ireland to no more than £137,000, or as 15 to 1; and, strangely enough, the post-office also was overlooked, though its produce at that time in Great Britain was £874,300, and in Ireland only £80,000, about 10 to 1.

The charge of unfairness to Ireland, in these fiscal arrangements, must not be set down as the angry exaggeration of disappointed patriotism, coming out in the warmth of debate. Lord Fitzgerald and Vescey was chancellor of the Irish Exchequer in 1816, and being then the mouthpiece of government in proposing the consolidation of the exchequers, he thus denounced the injustice of the rate of contribution, (2-17ths,) imposed upon Ireland by the Union; he remarked:—"I hope it will not be said that Ireland throws a great burden on the empire to save herself. Oh, no! The necessity of reviewing the act of Union has been caused by the sacrifices she has made, doing her best to keep pace with you. You contracted with her for an expenditure she could not meet. She had been led to hope that her expenditure would be less when united to you than before. She has absolutely paid more in taxes since the Union than seventy-eight millions, being forty-seven more than her revenue in the fifteen years on which her contribution was calculated."

The Right Honourable Mr. Goulburn, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, declared in 1822, that "the Union contribution of 2-17th, was then allowed on all hands to have been more than she was able to bear."

Mr. Speaker Foster thus indignantly exposed the inconsistency or hypocrisy of Lord Castlereagh:—

"It is curious to observe the noble lord's arguments last year and now. Our growing wealth was then held out by him as tending to render us too difficult to be governed by our present constitution, and there was the greater hurry for taking away our parliament. Now our poverty is made the pretence—we must take the Union to save us from bankruptcy! We have not the means to go on. We have over-paid our due proportion of the war expense, by a million a-year; and of the peace expense by £500,000! We have almost ruined the kingdom by this profusion; and Britain, in proposing the measure, means to give us that million and half million, and hereafter tax herself to pay it!

"I own we have granted largely—we have not measured our grants by our means so much as by our zeal to uphold Great Britain; but are we for this to be punished, and our parliament transported, like a felon, for its extravagant efforts to maintain British connexion, by

maintaining the cause of Britain? Did the noble lord sit by during the two last sessions—the most expensive we ever saw,—and not only see, but *urge us* to give the supplies we gave, meaning at a future day to make our liberality, and these cordial effusions of our loyalty, so many arguments for taking away our parliament, and annihilating our constitution?.....Is there any child so weak as to believe he is in earnest, or that he means to load England to save Ireland? And how is this ‘million’ to be paid us?—In money? Are our past advances to be repaid? No! Taxes to be taken off? No! He gives us *calculation*, nothing but *calculation*! I will go into his detail and show you the imposition.”

The Consolidation of the Exchequer occurred in 1816; and we shall see whether the munificent promises of the Union were then, or subsequently, justly and generously redeemed. It is needless to say that at this time neither kingdom had paid off its debt, nor had the “incorporating Union,” the enriching partnership with prosperous England, nor yet the streams of gold flowing from the East, enabled Ireland to sustain a uniform system of taxation. Well, then, of course, England had reduced her own debt, greatly, and thus realised the condition that was to be acted upon, when the other two failed? By no means. She doubled her own debt; but she took care, at the same time, to increase Ireland’s fourfold, and thus, unjustly and cruelly, effected the contemplated object. The following table exhibits the debt of each country, respectively, together with the annual charge in 1801 and 1817, including unfunded as well as funded debt, and the annual charge on both kinds:—

GREAT BRITAIN.			IRELAND.	
	Debt.	An. Charge.	Debt.	An. Charge.
5th Jan. 1801.	£ 450,504,984	£ 17,718,851	£ 28,545,134	£ 1,244,463
5th Jan. 1817.	734,522,104	28,238,416	112,704,773	4,104,514

*Par. Paper*, 35 of 1819.

The ruinous system of loans had been resorted to, because Ireland had been overpowered by taxation. The finance committee, in 1815, thus bore testimony to this fact:—“Your committee cannot but remark that for several years Ireland has, in permanent taxation, advanced more rapidly than Great Britain herself, notwithstanding the immense exertions of that country, and including the extraordinary



war taxes. The late Baron Foster, then Mr. Leslie Foster, stated on the same occasion, that the taxation of Ireland, at the Union, was £2,440,000; in 1810 it had risen to £4,280,000; in 1816 it was £5,760,000. In fact, taxation in that country had been carried almost to its *ne plus ultra*!”

In a parliamentary committee, for revision of taxation, March 26, 1830, Lord Sydenham declared that the state of Ireland ought to bring shame on the memory of most British financiers, and be a warning and a guide to all future ones, as proving that the Chancellor of the Exchequer may lay so heavy a load on a country as to produce diminution of revenue instead of an increase.

From papers moved for by the present Lord Monteagle, and prepared under his personal superintendence, at a time when he was moved by all the zeal of an advocate, and the anxiety of an English chancellor, to make out a case for the prosperity of Ireland since the Union, we learn that

The Excise receipts for Ireland, in 1817, were . . .	£1,770,550
Do. . . . . Do. . . . . in 1841, . . . . .	1,279,484

Showing a decrease of . . . . .	£491,066
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and this, notwithstanding the vast increase of population during that time!

From the same authority we learn that the total exclusive *payments* of Great Britain, in the sixteen years from the Union to the consolidation, amounted to . . . £533,220,000

But from unquestionable data, it is proved that her exclusive liabilities during that time, amounted to . . . £935,201,381

Deduct payments, . . . . .	533,220,000
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Therefore, she failed to provide by annual taxation, for	£401,981,381
And having created debt in the interval, to no higher amount than, . . . . .	280,000,000

She still left as an unfair “common” charge, . . .	£121,981,381
Ireland, therefore, was unfairly made liable for 2-17ths of that amount, or . . . . .	£14,350,774

Again, the total exclusive *liabilities* of Great Britain during forty-two years, since the Union, amounted to £2,033,067,484

Her total exclusive payments in that time, are . . .	1,460,774,648
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Which fell short of her liabilities in the sum of . . .	£572,292,836
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The committee of 1815, spoke of “relieving Ireland from a burden which experience had proved too great,” of “rendering her resources more productive,” &c. But how has this been done? Why, within a year from the time of their report, “no less than seventeen millions

were struck off from the taxation of Great Britain, whereas *ten* years elapsed ere the relief of Ireland exceeded half a million!" And be it recollected, that while the annual charge on the British debt from 1801 to 1817, increased only 59 per cent., the same charge on the Irish debt advanced in the same time to 228 per cent.!

As I am doing little more than presenting the most striking results of the elaborate calculations of Mr. J. O'Connell, feeling that it would be unwise, considering the taste of general readers, to load these pages with masses of figures, or perplex them with intricate details, I cannot do better than state the effect of all this financial management of Great Britain, in the honourable and learned gentleman's own words. "This sum, (£572,292,836) has therefore fallen upon the *common* contributions; and the result to Ireland has been that she has had to pay to a standard of taxation aggravated by the above amount. Had the Union terms—bad as they were—been faithfully observed, no part of the above would have been defrayed out of taxes bearing equally on Ireland, as on Great Britain; and, therefore, the common taxation would have been reduced so much. Ireland's share of this relief would have been 2-17ths or £67,328,564. and *to this extent* (aggravated, of course, by the sums that must be due as interest and compound interest,) she has been defrauded by Great Britain!"

#### UNACCREDITED TAXATION.

IRELAND has for many years received a large proportion of her foreign articles through English ports, and not directly through her own. The consequence has been, that the duty being paid in England is accredited to the British revenue, though, in fact, an Irish contribution to the state taxes. The late Lord Congleton admitted its amount to be at least £300,000 a year. Mr. William Stanley, in his "Facts for Ireland," makes it £340,000. But by referring to the details of receipts on customs in Great Britain and Ireland, we are fully warranted in setting down the sum at an average of £400,000. If allowance were made for this—and why not? the average income of Ireland for twenty-six years, up to 1843, would be £4,916,019, instead of £4,516,019; and the British income during the same period, would be reduced from £49,942,791 to £49,542,791.

As Ireland was justly bound by the Union only in an annual charge of £1,240,000, this subtracted from the average income, will leave a surplus of the latter, amounting to £3,776,000, which had gone to England as the Irish contribution to the common expenditure. Hence, the Irish constitution bears not merely the proportion of 2-17ths, but, the far more grievous proportion of 2-12ths.

Take another illustration of "Justice to Ireland":—

## Total relief from taxation from 1815 to 1843 :—

Great Britain, . . . . .	£45,550,000
Ireland, . . . . .	2,400,000

Excess of British relief, . . . . .	£43,150,000
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## Taxes imposed from 1815 to 1843 :—

Great Britain, . . . . .	£10,620,000
Ireland, . . . . .	1,060,000

## Taxes from 1800 to 1815 :—

Great Britain, . . . . .	£30,000,000
Ireland, . . . . .	4,450,000

## Total taxes imposed from the Union to 1843 :—

Great Britain, . . . . .	£37,000,000
Ireland, . . . . .	5,560,000

Thus the relief given to Ireland, was to that of Great Britain as 1 to 18, while the share of taxes imposed has been higher than as 1 to 7.

We hear much of the exemption of Ireland from assessed taxes. But why is she exempt? Is it from the kindness of her rulers? No, they have abandoned the idea of taxing everything they tax in Britain, only because the poverty of this country rendered the attempt a signal failure. Carriages and horses were relinquished, servants were dismissed, hearths extinguished, windows built up, beloved lap-dogs hanged, and packs of hounds disbanded or shot. Hundreds and thousands of notices to this effect, were pouring in on the government, till at last these unprofitable taxes were given up. It was dislike of such a precedent, and not love of Ireland, that restrained Sir Robert Peel from visiting us with the Income Tax. But in fact, while these obnoxious taxes were remitted to Ireland only in thousands, they were remitted to Britain in millions.

The absentee drain is variously estimated. Lord Cloncurry and Mr. N. P. Leader reckoned it £4,000,000, other authorities set it down at £4,650,000 annually. Mr. J. O'Connell considers that at least 5-6ths of this sum are spent in Great Britain; and taking the per centage of benefit to the latter country on that expenditure, so low as 4 per cent, we have £130,000 to add to Lord Congleton's estimate of unaccredited taxation. To which add the *Tea* duties, and an average sum of about £65,000, (see parliamentary paper No. 222 of 1842,) and you have £915,000 annually, for which Ireland has got no credit.

The "revenue drain" varies from year to year, according to the



greater or less consumption of foreign goods imported through England. Taking the lowest estimate of both credited and uncredited taxation, "Ireland," says Mr. J. O'Connell, "must have lost in the last three years more than £1,200,000 out of her revenue, and England got the benefit of it, in addition to the other Irish out-goings, that are to her advantage. The only remaining item of 'drain' is the money Ireland pays for such manufactures imported, as her poverty has caused her to cease supplying herself with. This cannot but be more than two millions of money at the very least, and therefore the total annual drain from Ireland, can in no case be less than seven millions!"

No wonder, then, England's capital accumulates—her manufactures flourish—her commerce reigns—and her wealth abounds to the world's admiration! A pretty good price we pay—SEVEN MILLIONS a year, for a few reflected rays of her imperial glory, which may chance to gleam upon us through the dense atmosphere of her prejudice. But why should Ireland shine in a borrowed light, and not in her own native splendour? Why should a nation with a population of nine millions, endowed with a *physique* the finest in the world—having in abundance within their own broad and fertile island, all the great elements of Independence—why should she be the satellite of any nation on earth? Was she made to be a mere *adjective*—an appendage never able to stand alone and maintain a substantial dignity? We boast of the emerald; but what avails it when it is a mere ornament in England's crown? Had not Ireland a crown of her own, venerable for its antiquity, when Britain was first the crouching slave of the Roman, then of the Saxon, and then of the Norman?

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE ALLEGED POST-UNION PROSPERITY OF IRELAND.

WHEN Irish independence was swamped by English power, availing itself of Poyning's Law, and not only shutting the ports of the world against us, but also wickedly crushing our internal trade, then the nation groaned in poverty and discontent. On the other hand, when our parliament was free, all our social interests flourished with amazing rapidity. Again, when we lost our legislature—when the making of our laws and the regulation of our national affairs were transferred to another country, where hostile interest were predominant and vigilant—when "*Ichabod*" was written with a bloody hand on the temple of our constitution, and freedom shrieked as the glory departed—then was the magnificent temple of our commerce also deserted, and the grass began to grow about its doors.

The Union has proved a perennial fountain of misery, whose stream is swelling every year into a more turbid and angry flood, and is destined to flow on for ever while its cause remains. Vainly do political parties moralize on its margin or try to bind it with chains, or turn back its course with bayonets. Yet if, during so many years of peace, when the arts of industry have so greatly flourished, especially in Great Britain, and commerce has sped so rapidly on the wings of science, Ireland had improved in nothing, it were strange indeed! How could Great Britain, in the exuberance of her prosperity, hinder some streamlets from reaching the soil of her sister and partner? The gain however, was marvellously little, but if it had been ten-fold more, if this country had kept pace with other nations, instead of lagging so wofully behind, it would still remain to be proved, that this progress was in consequence of British legislation and not in spite of it.

In the last century Ireland was very near following the glorious example of America: had she done so, she might have been now one of the most prosperous allies of that great empire, whose ambassadors, with those of all nations, would be mingling with the brilliant society of our busy and wealthy metropolis; meantime she would thus confer

in her freedom far greater advantages on Great Britain than can ever be wrung out of her in her bondage. But as in the story of Ariosto's fairy<sup>o</sup>—so beautifully accommodated by Macauley—Irish liberty was condemned for a long season to wear the form of a foul and poisonous snake, grovelling, hissing, stinging. Woe to those who, in disgust and hate, attempt to crush her; for though her period of degradation has been long protracted, she shall yet be transformed into her own celestial shape, and shine out in her native beauty and glory!

From 1780 the rate of exchange was steadily in favour of Ireland in her dealings with England. For this fact, we have the authority of a parliamentary committee on currency, &c., in 1804, who stated that trade, manufactures, and agriculture, had rapidly advanced after 1782, ascribing this advance, however, to a most inadequate cause, namely, the establishment of the Bank of Ireland. There are ample statistics, which show the poverty of Ireland since the Union, as compared with the years of independence that preceded it, indicating the increasing inability of the Irish people to consume those articles which were regarded in the light of luxuries, far more before the Union than now, when they have become almost necessities; yet, through extreme poverty, the consumption has declined, notwithstanding the great increase in population.

It is true there has been an increased export of cattle, sheep, and provisions since the Union. But what does this prove? Simply that the Irish have been gradually reduced to a potato diet, and are obliged to ship off everything else to pay the charges on the land. It is well known, that even extensive farmers can seldom afford to eat meat, while, if the labouring classes can get the taste of it at Christmas and Easter, they are thankful.\*

Mr. Montgomery Martin, to whose curious revelations in Irish history I have already deferred, has undertaken to demonstrate the greater prosperity of Ireland since the Union than before. This gentleman's structure, based on *fabricated data*, has been completely demolished by Alderman Staunton, in the Conciliation Hall, December 11, 1843. The object of Mr. Martin was to show a decline in Irish prosperity during the eighteen years of parliamentary independence! How does he accomplish this? Just as he proved the tolerant nature of Queen Elizabeth's government. He *picks* out of a table of exports every item showing a decline, and *omits* every item showing an increase, though the omitted articles are the true index of

\* See Report of the Land Commissioners.



the country's prosperity. Among these omissions, he actually includes LINEN!! The accurate and conscientious statist—the pink of political economists, also forgot, or rather purposely overlooked, candles, oats! bacon! beef! butter!! And while he exultingly declared that he had found a “decrease *on all the items*,” the Unionists were in ecstasies. He also arbitrarily fixed on the years most favourable to his purpose, for the sake of a petty advantage. He should have begun at 1782, and ended at 1800. Instead of this, he commenced with 1785, and ended with 1798. But on the *whole transactions*, even within this limited period, there appears an *increase* instead of a deficit of £3,536,000. But if you take the entire period of eighteen years, from 1782 to the Union, there is an increase of not less than £7,000,000. Such was the vivifying influence of a free parliament. And be it remembered, that this increase was effected notwithstanding the disturbing and desolating influence of the Rebellion.

Mr. Martin curiously scanned the columns of exports and imports, and wherever he saw an article at a low figure during any year, (as fluctuations must always be expected,) he most philosophically fixed upon that, to prove a decline in *all* the items. Sugar, wine, and tobacco, were the articles that seemed to suit him best. But Mr. Staunton has shown, that if he had taken four years after 1782, and four years before 1800, as he should have done, even in these articles there would have been found an *increase* of the following magnitude:—

Sugar	-	-	-	-	361,000 cwts.
Wine	-	-	-	-	1,207,000 gallons.
Tobacco	-	-	-	-	12,800,000 lbs.

Such is the oracle of the anti-Irish press, whose editors so flip-pantly complain that the opponents of the Union do not deal in argument, or in any figures but those of rhetoric. Alas! what avails demonstration to men whose interest and prejudice prevent them from seeing it? Mr. Martin relies very much on the fact, that 3,213 houses have been built in Dublin since the Union. This is partly accounted for by the increase of population in forty years, and the wise disposition of people in business to enjoy good air in the suburbs. Surely this is no great increase after all in that long period, when compared with the rapid enlargement of other towns in the sister kingdom. But our oracle said nothing about the still greater number of houses that are insolvent and falling into ruins. In 1822, it was stated in a parliamentary committee, that from 1815 to 1821, insolvent houses

were fast increasing in Dublin, and in the latter year, the number of them amounted to 4,719. Is not this a fine proof of prosperity?

Mr. Martin, following the Railway Commissioners, insists that the exports and imports of Ireland doubled in the ten years from 1825 to 1835. But Alderman Staunton proves, beyond a doubt, that this could not be the case.

Without trade a populous country (and Ireland is one of the most populous for its territory in the world,) must always be involved in great misery. But trade without capital is impossible, especially in an age of machinery; and therefore Ireland must remain wretched while the Union lasts! Nearly nine millions of money are drained from her annually. If this sum, or the half of it, were spent in Ireland, what a brisk circulation of money would result—what a demand for labour, and for the produce of the country—creating an excellent home market, saving the cost and risk of export to the farmer, and enabling him and his workmen to eat something better than lumpers, and wear something better than rags. Under such circumstances thriving manufactures would gradually grow up from the saving of agricultural labour, now rendered impossible by absenteeism, and uncertainty of tenure. Then, Englishmen, seeing us helping ourselves, would adventure their capital among us, which now flows into South America, whose agitation, compared with ours, is that of the hurricane and the earthquake. There is no reason to doubt that if we had a parliament, we should get all the credit we required, till we should be able, in some measure, to compete with Great Britain, without infringing the principles of free trade, which I hope the monopoly and combination of British merchants will never render necessary.

The effect of the Union in increasing absenteeism can be denied by no one who has the least knowledge or candour. It has also led to foreign tastes and preferences—and to alienation of feeling—to ruinous ambition and prodigality in aristocratic families, vainly striving to rival the English nobility, to an almost total neglect of Ireland. The moral and social injury is nearly equal to the pecuniary loss which it inflicts. Hence, the execrations of a starving people that sometimes follow our heartless absentees to their graves. How singularly has the prophecy of Adam Smith, concerning the effects of a Union with England, been falsified!

“By a Union with Great Britain,” said he, “Ireland would gain, besides the freedom of trade, other advantages much more important, and which would much more than compensate any increase of taxes

that might accompany that Union. By the Union with England the middling and inferior ranks of people in Scotland gained a complete deliverance from the power of an aristocracy which had always before oppressed them. By a Union with Great Britain, the greater part of the people of all ranks in Ireland, would gain an equally complete deliverance from a much more oppressive aristocracy; an aristocracy not founded like that of Scotland, in the natural and respectable distinctions of birth and fortune, but in the most odious of all distinctions, those of religious and political prejudices; distinctions which, more than any other, animate both the insolence of the oppressors, and the hatred and indignation of the oppressed, and which commonly render the inhabitants of the same country more hostile to one another, than those of different countries ever are. Without a Union with Great Britain, the inhabitants of Ireland are not likely, for many ages, to consider themselves one people." To this Mr. M'Cullagh adds, in a note:—"The incorporating (?) Union with Ireland effected in 1801, has hitherto only partially delivered the people of that country from the domination of the oppressive and intolerant aristocracy alluded to by Dr. Smith; but it has paved the way for the complete consummation of that desirable consequence."\*

This may be, but I really cannot see how. Certainly, forty-four years of trial have not effected much in this way. Oppressive and intolerant as the lords of our soil may be, their presence would mitigate their power. Their exacting agents, and their bribed underlings, are far more intolerable than themselves. In the present improved state of public opinion as to the "duties of property"—under the surveillance of the press—and, especially, under the moral restraints and patriotic tendencies of a parliament elected by a large, enlightened, and sober population—a happy adjustment would soon be effected of the relations between landlords and tenants. Then our nobility would be anxious about their character and moral standing in Ireland; whereas, now it is a matter of perfect indifference to them so long as they stand well with the English aristocracy.

Mr. Otway in his valuable and well-written Report already quoted, observes, that "in the present day the principal impediments to the growth of manufacturing industry arise from the want of a comfortable middle class, and the condition of the agricultural population."—But how are these to be created? what has been done towards the production of such a class by imperial legislation during the last forty-

\* Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, by M'Cullagh, p. 430.



four years? Let the Reports of the Poor Law, Railway, and Land Commissioners, and the testimony of all foreign travellers in Ireland, answer! If this state of things, then, is ever to be altered, there must be a total change of system. The seat of power must be removed to Ireland. The moral lever by which her people are to be raised from poverty and degradation, must have its fulcrum, not in St. Stephen's, but in College-green.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## OBJECTIONS AGAINST THE REPEAL OF THE UNION.

“None will barter away the immediate jewel of his soul. Though a great house is apt to make slaves haughty, yet it is purchasing a part of the artificial importance of a great Empire too dear, to pay for it all the essential rights and all the intrinsic dignity of human nature.”—EDMUND BURKE.

I. It is objected against the agitation for Repeal, that “the measure is quite unnecessary, inasmuch as the Imperial Parliament is both able and willing to redress all our grievances.”

Its ability to redress many of them we admit, but we very much doubt its willingness. Yet, if its justice were equal to its power, it could no more make Ireland contented and happy without a parliament, than an intelligent and high-spirited Englishman could be made so without liberty. Lacking this, all other gifts pall upon the national sense. The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmities, “but a wounded spirit, who can bear?” The Union inflicted on Ireland’s spirit, wounds deep and rankling, which British policy has done little to heal, and much to inflame.

The very concessions of England have been always so made as to “offend the pride of a gallant nation.” Her favours are alms. The most stinted measures of justice have not been granted as rights, but as “graces”—not as a debt long due with interest upon interest—but as a gift for which we are required to wear the bonds of everlasting gratitude. Thus, Britain’s self-complacent kindness adds to Ireland’s heartfelt degradation. We would do and suffer much to advance the temporal condition of our people. But, even for prosperity we cannot barter liberty. England may clothe her naked subjects in Ireland, but it is with her own livery, which she can strip off at a moment’s warning, as Queen Elizabeth threatened to “unfrock” the disobedient bishops. She may also spread a table for our starving millions, but the breath of her pride would taint the richest banquet. Ireland may exclaim—

“She chills me while she aids—  
My benefactor, not my sister!”

What quantity of roast-beef and plum-pudding in a work-house will compensate the honest peasant for the homely Christmas dinner which he earned by the sweat of his brow, and enjoyed in the bosom of a smiling family by his own cottage fireside? We want not favour but freedom!

“The proud man’s sympathies are all  
Like silvery clouds, whose faithless showers  
Come frozen to hailstones in their fall.”

What rational hope is there that Great Britain will ever do justice to Ireland—supposing it could be done to a nation while denuded of political rights, and deprived of the life-spring of its own independence? Why did she persist in violating the pledges about Emancipation for twenty-nine years after the Union, despite the most humble and urgent petitioning—the most powerful pleading—the most incessant agitation? And why, after all, did she yield it ungraciously, reluctantly, to the force of intimidation, and the dread of civil war?

If Ireland, as we are told, is as completely incorporated with England as Yorkshire, and is, therefore, to be treated as an “English county,” why were not the principles of the Reform Bill extended equally to the whole United Kingdom? Why were not Ireland’s corporations cleansed at the same time with those of England, and invested with the same rights? If the United Kingdom be one body, surely all the members ought to enjoy the same regimen. Why is it ever a special object with the state physician to apply a coercive ligature to prevent the circulation of liberty into so large a limb as Ireland? Do not legislative enactments perpetually give the lie to ministerial professions, humbling this country by exceptions, limitations, and restrictions, as mortifying as they are gratuitous and impolitic? But England forgets this diversity of legislation, and forces her uniformity upon us, just wherever and whenever it happens to be injurious and hateful, as in the case of the poor law—a most provoking instance of conceited ignorance—and “arrogant despotism.”

With such an *animus* against Ireland, growing with her growth, and strengthening with her strength, since the conquest, what can we reasonably expect from the Imperial Parliament? They will yield something indeed to extreme pressure, and thus hold out a *bonus* to agitation.

But will they ever frankly, confidingly, and justly put Ireland on an equality with Britain?

Will they extend the franchise to all payers of direct taxes?

Will they free the electors from the tyranny of the landlords?



Will they give Ireland 170, or even 150 members?

Will they agree to withdraw Irish measures, protested against by a majority of Irish members?

Will they open the University to the nation?

Will they abandon the debasing system of centralization, and restore us the public departments, which would hold out rewards, however inferior, to the talents and virtues of our countrymen, giving as large a proportion of government offices to Irishmen, in Ireland, as are enjoyed, in England, by Englishmen, and, in Scotland, by Scotchmen? Or if not, will they give us our proportional number of appointments in Britain—equal in honour, influence, and emolument, instead of meeting the demand with an insulting sneer, telling us we are disqualified and unworthy to hold them?

Will they impose on absentees a tax of twenty-five per cent., or a million annually, to be devoted to public works and improvements in this plundered country?

Will they release us from unjust liabilities for Great Britain's national debt, and the enormous expenses of her wanton and iniquitous wars against the independence of distant nations?

Above all, will they relieve this nation from the *incubus* of a costly, crushing, and irritating Establishment, maintained by the whole kingdom for the benefit of less than one-tenth of its people, and these the wealthiest of the community?

If nearly all these questions must be answered in the negative, it follows irresistibly that A NATIVE PARLIAMENT IS NECESSARY.

II. "An Irish Parliament would be intolerably corrupt."

A strange objection to come from *Irishmen*! But on what is it founded? Is it on the conduct of our parliament at the time of the Union and before? On this subject, I need only refer the reader to a previous chapter, in which I have shown, that, filled as the House of Commons was, *fraudulently*, with placemen and dependants; and tempted as the genuine representatives were by the most enormous bribes, they exhibited an instance of public virtue rarely equalled. If some were, unhappily, corrupted, who corrupted them? Is the cool, calculating tempter less guilty or less infamous than his needy victim?

Did not Walpole find by his experience of the English Parliament, that "every man had his price?" And did not Sir Robert Peel make his servile majority turn round last session, as if they were so many noble and honourable puppets?

But how unjust, inconsiderate, and preposterous to argue from the condition of a parliament consisting, for the most part, of aristocratic and government nominees to that of one fairly representing the wishes

of the people, and responsible to a constituency, broad, intelligent, and free, who should, according to the ancient practice of the constitution, have an opportunity of calling their members to account once in three or four years! There is every reason to believe, that there would not be a more faithful or a better informed legislature in the world than a parliament in Dublin would be *now*. Therefore, this exceedingly offensive objection falls to the ground.

III. "An Irish Parliament would be an arena of constant party strife."

If it should surpass the British in this respect, it would be bad enough. But there is no reason to think so. The state of society has much altered in Ireland as well as in England during the last fifty years. Duelling is nearly banished from among us. Nowhere is physical force and violence more strongly condemned. Individual rights are generally acknowledged, while mutual respect and courtesy increasingly distinguish the people of all ranks. Nowhere is politeness more frank and cordial in the upper classes, and religious bigotry is fast dying away. After a long and irritating struggle between an ascendant minority and a suffering nation, it must take some time, of course, for unpleasant feelings to subside. But it is surprising and delightful to see how readily the opposing parties come to a good understanding in those public institutions where they are now working together.

I need not remark, that in the Railway Boards and Agricultural Societies, not only creeds, but politics are quite forgotten; all is concord and cheerful co-operation for the good of the country. The habit of acting together for such a noble object smoothes off asperities, and brings out to view on both sides many amiable and excellent qualities, which mutual unacquaintance or prejudice had concealed. This temper wants nothing but a little of the enthusiasm of nationality among Protestants, counteracting and overcoming English influence and intrigue, to render the claim of Ireland to a native parliament irresistible, and the institution itself an unmixed blessing.

Adam Smith imagined that the American Republics would have rushed asunder by their natural centripetal force, but for the binding influence and sweet compression of Great Britain! He fancied also that a Union with England would be a prelude to the most perfect harmony between Protestant and Catholic, Whig and Tory in Ireland! His philosophy did not enable him to foresee, that it would be the interest and policy of England to find out the "fittest temptations," (as one of her ministers confidentially expressed it to his employers,) to foment and perpetuate division and strife; nor that a local parliament

would be the only effectual means of rallying a national spirit, to resist such unhallowed endeavours. That the doctrine of amalgamation has even yet found no favour in Downing-street, or in Dublin Castle, is evident enough from the management of the late State Trials, when every man of true Irish feeling, whether Protestant or Catholic, was excluded as a black or tainted sheep. Indeed, the act of 1800 may be called the act of *Dis-Union*, with much more propriety, than the act of Union. There *may* be a better disposition now at headquarters than prevailed last year. But why should Ireland be dependant for justice and peace on the political barometer of England? However, she must not be beguiled by appearances—it would be weakness itself to trust such a self-transforming Proteus as Sir R. Peel. After a desperate effort to crush the Irish cause by military demonstrations, and state prosecutions, followed by the unjust and illegal imprisonment of its leaders, it is hard to think that subtle politician sincere in his sudden overtures of conciliation. Foiled at his chosen weapons—he seems only to have changed his tactics—and substituted secret stratagem for open assault—he will give in a little, that he may gain a permanent advantage and a better position. Lordly smiles and patronizing promises, may tell more fatally against Irish liberty, than monster indictments or fortified barracks. Nothing but well established popular institutions, having their key-stone in a native parliament, can withstand the sources of division and strife that are ever flowing in upon us from England.

IV.—“An Irish Parliament would disturb the rights of property, by dispossessing the inheritors of the forfeited estates.”

If so, they should disinherit nine-tenths of the proprietors of Ireland, and forthwith plunge the country in all the horrors of a sanguinary revolution! Is it not absurd to talk of such a thing with a hereditary House of Lords; a House of Commons for the most part aristocratic; two millions of Protestants to back the proprietors, and all the power of Britain to sustain them? Persons who thus talk of the forfeited estates, forget how often they have changed hands, of how many conveyances, settlements, and mortgages, they have been the subjects; how vastly many of them have improved in value, by the sinking of capital in them through a series of ages, and how many of them have passed, and are daily passing, by purchase, into the hands of Roman Catholics; and how completely the disannulling of their titles would uproot all the rights of property, and convert the social fabric itself into a chaos! No sane man could think of any spoliation so monstrous—so like the proceedings of Strafford or Parsons. But should the



apprehension be entertained by any weak-minded persons, it might be easily quieted, by making it an act of treason against the state to bring the question into parliament.

Nor let it be supposed that in this body a democratic influence would *dangerously* predominate. The very reverse is to be feared. Feudal feelings and habits are still strong among our people; accustomed to look up to a superior, they are easily led, especially when the leader has the *prestige* of rank and the influence of property. So innate and ardent, indeed, is the homage which our peasantry render to these, that the conduct of a "*real* gentleman" must be shockingly repulsive or oppressive to alienate the affections of his tenants and dependants. Let landlords be—what it is a sin and a shame for them not to be—Irishmen in heart, drawing their people "with the cords of a man," and not driving them like beasts—and *ceteris paribus*—the man of highest rank and largest property may also calculate on being triumphantly returned to parliament, even if Ireland enjoyed universal suffrage.

V.—Another and a very powerful objection to Repeal, in the minds of many excellent persons, is that—"An Irish Parliament would soon abolish the Established Church."

Let us guard here against misunderstanding. The object of Repealers and of all other voluntaries, is not to injure the *Church* of England, but merely to separate it from the state, which they contend would be a benefit instead of an injury. To its orders, ministry, doctrines, or liturgy, they have nothing to say. They quarrel with it not as a religious institution, but a political burden; its present invidious position being not only unfavourable to its right influence as a church, but an intolerable wrong to the rest of the community. If Ireland is to have an established church at all—which we deprecate—on every principle of equity, it should be the church of the majority—the church of the 6,500,000 and not of the 850,000. It is so in England and Scotland, and if, as we are so often told, Ireland is treated with equal justice, wherefore this extraordinary difference? Why are all the ecclesiastical revenues of the nation enjoyed by the clergy of a tenth of the people, who are, therefore, ten times more richly endowed than the national clergy were before the Reformation? Whence, then, this monstrous violation of the alleged uniformity of imperial legislation?

This is not merely a financial wrong; it is not the legal violation of justice in thus misapplying public property, that constitutes the sorest part of the grievance. It is, as we have shown in our remarks on the Reformation, an odious monument of the conquest and degra-

dation of the country—in a word, the garrison of the *English interest*. Its *religious* mission, so far as the Catholics and Presbyterians are concerned, is “a mockery, a delusion, and a snare!”

According to Mr. Ward, M. P., whose estimate seems not far from the truth, the actual amount of Irish Church revenue is £552,753 per annum; nearly a pound a head for all the Episcopalians, if you exclude the Wesleyans, who provide for themselves on the voluntary principle, though they gave the church the advantage of their numbers in the census. It is said, that to apply this property to national purposes, is spoliation. If so, the Church of England has been enjoying the fruits of robbery for 300 years. If parliament may not justly dispose of this property, by what title does the establishment hold it? “We are astonished,” says a writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, “at the confidence with which this ridiculously absurd dogma has been maintained. It might as well be said, that taxes levied for the support of the army are the property of the soldiers, and that any attempt to reduce them, would be a violation of the rights of property! Tithes are *not* the property of the clergy; they are the property of the public. \* \* \* Every one must see that tithes are nothing more than an arbitrary, oppressive, and ruinous tax on the gross produce of the land, exclusively laid out in paying the wages of a particular class of public servants.”

It is true that the Composition Act has reduced the nominal income of the rectors one-fourth. But, in return for this reduction made, be it remembered, when the collection of this impost was impossible, they are sure of regular payment, and have escaped from the odium, strife, and danger of the old system, the landlord standing between them and an indignant people, and pocketing 25 per cent. for his trouble. But are the people, now deprived of the power of direct resistance, released from aught of the burden? By no means! If they do not bring the full amount of tithe to the agent, he will, in all probability, fling back the rent in the defaulter's face.

True the perpetual existence of this grievance is guaranteed in the Act of Union. A very good reason why it should be speedily repealed. Hitherto, however, this guarantee has been somewhat neglected. The church has no longer the power of taxing the whole population in vestry;—the landlords have got possession of one-fourth of her tithe property, and the government has seized on ten of her palaces, with the rich domains thereunto belonging, while the same number of her “apostolic sees” have perished, as if “the gates of hell” had prevailed against them. This does not look like preserving her rights, privileges, and property in their integrity!

But although the repealers insist that church revenue is public property, and ought to be devoted to public purposes, they solemnly disclaim the wish to deprive the present incumbents of a single shilling. Let them enjoy what they have while they live, and in the meantime there will be ample opportunity to make provision for the future, by calling forth the energies of the voluntary principle, with every possible advantage, unlike the people of Scotland, who had to provide for 500 parishes in one day.

In addition to the fixed revenue of the Establishment and the large sums granted by parliament for building churches, it has got for *educational* purposes from 1800 to 1824 no less a sum than £1,482,877, all under her special control, and made subservient directly or indirectly to the inculcation of her doctrines! \* What a number of provincial colleges this sum would have endowed, and what a blessing it might thus have conferred on the nation for all time to come! But with all these vast treasures, the church could not make progress. One institution after another designed to propagate her principles has perished in her feeble hands; and still she would fain preside with exclusive power over the public instruction of the nation! Some of her truest friends, therefore, begin to think that to a religious institution state support is no support at all, and that she would thrive far better—spiritually—on the voluntary system.

Why should she not do so as well as other churches? Can any reason be given which her clergy would not resent as a libel? Is it that there is not sufficient truth or zeal in her body to stand without state crutches, or swim without state bladders? Look at the church of Rome in Ireland: what a body of clergy she maintains in respectability, and what numerous and costly temples she is everywhere erecting by the free contributions of her people! Mr. O'Connell has shown, that "in the city of Dublin alone, there has been expended, upon the VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLE, in buildings, for the spiritual provision and education of Catholics, a sum exceeding £170,000."

Will it be said that the church of Rome is better able than Protestant churches to raise money for religious objects? Then see the case of the United States of America. There all creeds are equal in the eye of the law, all churches voluntary. And though there is an immense influx of irreligious population every year, pouring over a vastly extended territory, and set free from every old national habit that would restrain their evil propensities, the voluntary principle copes with all these enormous difficulties—bears the blessings of sal-

\* Lord's Sessional Papers, 1824, No. 47.



vation into the wilderness, and furnishes a supply of clergy equal to the most favoured parts of Great Britain.

It appears from the latest returns, that (not counting Catholics, Unitarians, and Universalists) there were, in 1843, no less than 17,000 Protestant and Evangelical ministers labouring in the United States, thus giving one such minister to every 1100 of the whole population of 19,000,000. Besides this vast voluntary expenditure for home objects, very large sums are raised for foreign missions in various countries.\*

In England there are 11,000 Dissenting congregations, whose ministers are thus supported, while hundreds of thousands are raised annually for extraneous and missionary objects. But if Irish Protestants are afraid to trust *their* church to the voluntary principle, let them reflect on the glorious position of the Free Church of Scotland. Finding, as many Episcopalians also find and feel, that state pay and Christian liberty are incompatible—and being cajoled by the government till they were weary and disgusted, they at last, to the number of 470, most nobly relinquished their manse, glebe, and churches, and cast themselves at once on the Christian liberality of the people. Since then 113 additional ministers have been ordained, making the number 583. They did not miscalculate in trusting the people. They are now erecting 700 places of worship at an expense of £350,000, of which they have already raised £241,050. They are also building 500 schools, for which upwards of £52,000 has been received. This vast architectural scheme is to be crowned by a splendid theological college at Edinburgh, to cost £20,000, contributed by twenty persons.

But what is to become of the ministers? They are, of course, partly supported by their congregations; but, independent of this support, there is a central *Sustentation Fund*, which amounted last May to £68,704. This secures £100 a-year to every minister of the body, in addition to local supplies. They have also various mission organizations, for which they raised £31,790 last year. These immense contributions are not the results of mere fitful zeal. They are raised on a regular system, wisely framed for permanent efficiency by the genius of Dr. Chalmers, who, though a beginner, has taught the voluntaries the power of their own principle.

Oh, what a blessed thing is freedom! Protestants of Ireland, go and do likewise! Let not the *imaginary* interests of your church stand in the way of the salvation of your country! Imitate the self-sacrifice of the Free Church of Scotland—the noblest in modern

\* North British Review, No. III. p. 158; see also Baird's Religion in America.

history. Have confidence in truth ! Have confidence in the people ! Have confidence in God !

Now, a word to the Catholics and Presbyterians. I do believe that there is not a government so tyrannically deaf to the voice of reason and justice as to say that such an Establishment shall be preserved for ever, except our own ; nor is there another nation in Christendom so well trained in constitutional agitation, that would have borne the stupendous anomaly so long—an anomaly not more disgraceful to those who impose, than to those who endure it ! An Establishment so devoid of rationality and equity—so opposed to sound policy—so incompatible with good government, and even with its own professed object—so palpably based on despotic power, proves demonstrably that the land it overshadows and awes to silence, has lost both its freedom and its manhood ! And the fact that the British legislature either will not, or dare not, abolish this grievance, shows clearly that they are utterly unfit to govern this country. To talk of the blessings of the constitution in the face of such a flagrant outrage on every constitutional maxim, is indeed a cruel mockery !

VI. “ But would not Repeal lead at once to CATHOLIC ASCENDANCY ? ”

No ; but if Great Britain persist in her present course, there will be some danger of it. If the principle of ecclesiastical establishments be maintained, the government may be forced, after one or two general elections, to put Ireland on an equality in this respect with England and Scotland, by establishing, or at least amply endowing, the Catholic Church. For this Sir R. Peel seems to be paving the way by his educational measures, and his Charitable Bequests and Maynooth Bills. By his policy, the “ No Popery ” cry will soon be stifled. The Orange body, from whose mouth it issues will be starved to a skeleton, or else tempted to adopt another tune, and wear another colour. If, then, the Church of Rome be endowed (as she will be inevitably, if the Union lasts), her *ascendancy* will follow naturally from her numbers, zeal, activity—and, above all, from her political power. The party that can turn the scales at elections, will be always courted by the minister, if they consent to receive his gifts.

How, then, is this evil (for an evil I must honestly consider the ascendancy of any church) to be averted ? Solely it would seem by a Repeal of the Union ! This has for some time been my deliberate conviction. The new Irish constitution, connected as it would be with the national recognition of the voluntary principle, as *fundamental and inviolable*, would render a Roman Catholic Establishment for ever impossible. The opposition given to the Charitable Bequests Bill, shows

that the people, in general, regard any connexion of their church with the state as a calamity. They are fully aware of the intrinsic evil of such a connexion, and I trust they will strenuously resist it.

Think you that, when the Catholics get the parliament in College-green, they will return only men of their own faith, with evil designs against Protestant liberty? They have not acted on such a principle hitherto, either at the hustings or in the corporations. They seem rather to prefer a Protestant candidate, if he be a respectable man and a liberal. Besides there are very decided Protestants, who feel perfectly convinced that Catholic gentlemen generally would not, under any circumstances, make themselves the tools of religious intolerance. Wherever any of this class have obtained office under government, they have fulfilled their duties in an impartial and creditable manner, without any exception of which I am aware. If they lean at all, it is to the side of power, like poor Mr. O'Driscoll.

Let us, however, for the sake of argument, suppose that the Catholics of Ireland, filled to fury with the *odium theologicum*, and smitten with a disastrous sectarian ambition, should at some future day forswear their solemn covenant with their Protestant fellow-countrymen, forget the precepts, and maxims, and example of their liberator—trample under foot the new Irish constitution on the grave of O'CONNELL! Suppose they thus basely betrayed their trust, and sacrificed their honour, would the Irish Protestants have no remedy? Could two millions of people so intelligent, spirited, and independent, with all the Lords, and most of the Commons on their side—with arms in their hands, and all the force of Great Britain to support their righteous cause, while that of their perfidious and persecuting antagonists, would attract the execrations of the civilized world!—*could* they have anything to fear?

I have supposed the worst case that could possibly happen. But how unlikely! I should as soon expect to see England invaded and conquered by the Emperor of China, or France by Queen Pomare. If I do not greatly mistake the signs of the times, the whole current of Irish society runs quite in another direction. Religious liberty, embracing the rights of each man's conscience, is gaining ground among us rapidly. An illustrious husbandman has been sowing the seed broad-cast over the country for many a year. Doubt not that the full harvest will come in due time. Strange it is, if the Catholics of Ireland have not learned one great lesson of history, which is written in blood, and read by the lurid light of blazing faggots, that RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION has been the ruin of every nation which it cursed with its presence; and on no soil in the world have its demon



footprints left a more visible or a more indelible warning than in Ireland. Yet it must be admitted, and it should be admitted cheerfully, that, in an age when blood-thirsty intolerance on one side or other raged all over Europe, the Irish Catholics, when in power, were singularly tolerant and forbearing in this country. Perhaps it may be truly said, that no people ever suffered so much persecution, and inflicted less.

I cannot dismiss this objection, without again earnestly urging my Protestant fellow-countrymen to reflect seriously on the expediency, if not the necessity, of speedily establishing the voluntary system in Ireland, for the sake of religion itself as well as of civil liberty. "The age of bribery is come! Retaining some one sect in special alliance, states have begun to extend side-looks of love to others, and to employ their gold to purchase their favour. They now *pension* those whom of old they persecuted, and whom of late they could only tolerate; and, as if they had become indiscriminate in this new affection—as if characters the most opposite were alike acceptable to them—as if all differences were either fabulous or imperceptible, to pension nearly every sect that will consent to be pensioned."

## CHAPTER XIV.

## OBJECTIONS TO A REPEAL OF THE UNION, CONTINUED.

“There is in the progress of civilization a term at which exclusive privileges must be relaxed, or the possessors must perish along with them.”—HALLAM.

VII. THE next objection that comes under our notice is, that “an Irish Parliament would be involved in perpetual collision with England.”

But why should it, if its rights and privileges were accurately defined, and no attempts were made to violate them?

About a *regency*, should such a thing be unhappily required, there could never again be any dispute, as Ireland would be quite willing to have it a settled point, that the regent *de facto* in England should be the regent *de jure* here. The *revenue* question could also be satisfactorily adjusted at the outset. *Trade* and *commerce* would give no annoyance, if they were what they ought to be, and soon will be, perfectly free.

The only other ground of difference would be, the question of *war*. Glad should we be, if any political arrangements could check the tendency to war among our English neighbours. True, they greatly dislike hostilities near home. But it is much to be feared, that even the mercantile community object to it more from interest than principle. Many would not unwillingly see it raging in India or in China, trampling down the rights of nations under its bloody hoofs, and commencing its desolations by the most shameful violation of treaties, provided British commerce is thereby promoted, and the younger branches of the aristocracy find “honourable” employment in human butchery, with military titles, pay, and pension. Most desirable is it, therefore, that this accursed thirst of conquest, which is now doubling its iniquity, by stimulating to similar atrocities the rival ambition of France, should meet with an additional counteraction in the free Parliament of Ireland.

VIII.—There are some who go so far as to say that the nobility would not degrade themselves by attending an Irish Parliament! Should they be so ridiculously conceited as to do this—the business of

the nation could go on without them. There is no aristocracy in Norway, and yet there is not on earth a country better governed. Let no one, however, believe that any aristocracy would willingly leave the work of legislation and government to other hands. It too intimately affects their privileges and properties, and they are too fond of power to do any such thing, through chagrin or sullen discontent.

There have been instances where unprofitable titles were cast away, in order to qualify men for official service in the republic. It was thus with Florence. "But the people," says Hallam, "now sure of their triumph, relaxed a little upon this occasion the ordinances of justice; and to make some distinction in favour of merit or innocence, effaced certain families from the list of nobility! Five hundred and thirty persons were thus elevated, as we may call it, to the rank of commoners. As it was beyond the competence of the Republic of Florence to change a man's ancestors, this nominal alteration left all the real advantages of birth as they were, and was undoubtedly an enhancement of dignity, though, in appearance, a very singular one. Conversely, several unpopular commoners were ennobled, in order to disfranchise them. Nothing was more usual in subsequent times than such an arbitrary change of rank, as a penalty or a benefit. Those nobles who were rendered plebeian by favour, were obliged to change their name and arms."\*

See what the love of political power and office can do! Against dissensions between the aristocracy and the commons, wisdom and patriotism could easily guard by a just distribution of these desirable advantages. All minds should be honestly set to effect the necessary adjustment as soon as possible. For there are few whose judgment or foreboding does not tell them that the time of exclusive privilege is gone for ever. Concessions must be made to the people, largely, liberally, and in good faith, or the fabric of society is not safe.

IX.—"If Ireland is entitled to a separate parliament, on the same principle parliaments should be granted to Yorkshire, Wales, Ulster, Connaught, &c."

This is the *argumentum ad absurdum*, so often urged in the newspapers in a tone that indicates the opinion of the writers to be, that nothing more need or can be said on the subject. But, in my opinion, it betrays a very considerable want of candour, or else an extraordinary amount of ignorance or prejudice, regarding the claims of Ireland. Is not Yorkshire a part of England so vitally incorporated, that if it were to set up as a separate kingdom, there would be a

\* *Middle Ages*, vol. 1. p. 291.



violent schism in the body? Would not the hand be then revolting against the head? Besides what privations or grievances does Yorkshire suffer under, more than any other county in England? Has it been singled out for oppression and degradation—inadequately represented, and cruelly coerced—and almost excommunicated from the constitution? Nothing of all this has happened. What then does it want with a parliament of its own? Did it ever possess anything of the kind? What pretensions can it have to be aught but a great and influential member of the English kingdom?

Is it not folly in the extreme, as well as a gross insult to every Irishman to compare the pretensions of an English county to a nation, of which Edmund Burke speaks in the following terms:—"You changed the people—you altered the religion—but you never touched the form or the vital substance of free government in that kingdom. You deposed kings—you restored them—you altered the succession to theirs as well as to your own crown; but you never altered their constitution; the principle of which was respected by usurpation; restored with the restoration of the monarchy, and established, I trust, for ever, by the glorious Revolution. **THIS** has made Ireland that **GREAT AND FLOURISHING KINGDOM** that it is; and from a disgrace and a burden intolerable to this nation, has rendered her a principal part of our strength and ornament. This country cannot be said to have ever formally taxed her."\*

The Lord Chief Justice, indeed, in the late state trials, rebuked Mr. O'Connell somewhat sharply, for calling Ireland a "kingdom"—declaring that there is no such thing! If his lordship goes to church, and does not sleep there, the prayer for the Lord Lieutenant **must** grate painfully upon his loyal ear. How can he say *Amen* to the following? "Bless, we beseech thee, the whole council, direct their consultations to the advancement of thy glory, the good of thy church, the honour of her sacred majesty, and the safety and welfare of **THIS KINGDOM**." Not only are the prayers of the church by *law* established at variance with the judge's *dictum*, but, what is not a little unkind—that solemn *dictum* is forgotten in a few short months by the Queen's representative. In replying to the deputation from the Presbyterian church, Lord *Heytesbury* is pleased to call Ireland a "beautiful kingdom!"

Yes; she is not a would-be nor an upstart nation. She was an ancient kingdom when England was a miserable Roman province; a kingdom to whose learning and munificence, the Saxon people were indebted

\* Speech on Conciliation with America.

for the use of letters; a kingdom unconquerable by force of arms, where England's "standard could never be advanced an inch before her privileges,"—a kingdom with its own independent crown—its magistracy, laws, and learned institutions; with a large and fertile territory, great resources, a brave, numerous, and highly-gifted population: a kingdom encircled by the ocean, and fortified by nature, as if the very billows that break around its coasts, and the tempests that beat impotently against its "munition of rocks," were designed by the all-bountiful Creator, to proclaim to the people the doctrine and the duty of self-government.

This great kingdom—*great* in comparison with most of the independent states of Europe—her population exceeding those of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, put together, by nearly three millions—lost her legislature by fraud and corruption, only forty-five years ago—a term not worth counting in the age of a nation. But, her throne—her royal palaces—her magnificent senate house—her central law courts, are still with us. The *forms* of NATIONALITY remain, and the awful spirit that filled them with life and power—cast out by profane violence—walks forth in mysterious majesty through the land; the earth shakes beneath her feet; at her approach the hearts of the millions thrill with exulting hope; the mountains and the valleys joyously re-echo her once familiar voice! Never shall the land have rest till she is re-admitted and re-enthroned in her constitutional sanctuary!

It is said that Wales, too, may put in her claim to self-government, if those of Ireland be granted. Cambria is certainly a glorious country. She fought 800 years to maintain, inviolate, her mountain homes. Even after she had been subdued, she revolted again, and again. "On the news of the resumption of hostilities, the hostages imprisoned in England, in the royal fortresses, were usually put to death; and sometimes the king had them put to death before his eyes. John, son of Henry II., on one occasion, had *twenty-eight* of them, *all of tender age*, hanged before he sat down to dinner!"\* As in Ireland, the Welsh bards kept up the memory of past glory among the heart-broken slaves of England. But this was a consolation which their English Sovereign would not allow them. Hume tells us coolly, that Edward I., "sensible that nothing kept alive the ideas of military valour and of ancient glory, so much as the traditional poetry of the people, which, assisted by the power of music and the jollity of festivals, made deep impressions on the minds of the youth, *gathered all*

\* Thierry.

*the Welsh bards*, and from a barbarous, though not absurd policy, ordered them to be *put to death* !\*\*

In the same gothic spirit she destroyed all the records and monuments that could be found in the country. She even carried her antipathy to the language so far as to oppose the printing of the Bible in it at the Reformation ! The English sceptre has been to the Cambrians, too, a rod of iron. Doubtless, they would have been, and would even now be, much happier with a government of their own federally united with England, as Norway is with Sweden. But Wales is *geographically* one with England ; she was conquered many centuries before Ireland, and as to the elements of nationhood, they cannot be compared for a moment. In population, wealth, revenue, and in resources generally, the whole principality is surpassed by a single Irish county, Cork.

Again, we are told, forsooth, that Ireland may justly claim to be an independent kingdom ; any one of her arms or feet—Ulster, Connaught, or Cork, may set up in the same manner ! Was ever any thing so preposterous ? What, though each may have some customs and interests peculiar to itself ? Are they not parts of one whole, distinct, compact, formed above all nations for unity ; whose boundaries are defined by the hand that built its rocky coasts, and poured the ocean around them ? True, it is a nation embracing several races and creeds, but these are so mingled together, geographically and socially, and would, for all political purposes, be so completely identified by a native legislature, and its patriotic, ameliorating, conciliating, elevating, and uniting action on the population, that to erect distinct governments for each race and creed, would be as uncalled-for and impracticable as it is absurd. Some of our Ulster friends, indeed, remind us that they have more intercourse with Glasgow than with Dublin. But this is an intercourse neither of politics nor jurisdiction, but commercial, and would be rather increased than diminished by an Irish Parliament.

I would, however, ask the fine Presbyterian population of the North—“ Are you not Irishmen ? Were not your fathers in 1782 *Hibernis ipsis Hiberniores* ? Why should the descendants of such a noble race of freemen, glorying in the land of their birth, speak now the language of newly-imported Scotchmen ? Besides, are not half the population of Ulster Roman Catholics ? Is not a considerable portion of the Protestants connected with the Established

\* Thank God they cannot do this with the bards of *The Nation*.



Church, without any Scottish sympathies, and looking to Dublin as their metropolis? Why, then, should Ulster wish to sink itself into a Scottish colony?

The late Rev. Cæsar Otway, a Tory, but a true and generous Irishman, who loved as intensely as he sketched beautifully the glorious scenery of his native land, observed of DUBLIN, that it is just the site which the eye of a king would select for the capital of this Island. It is a splendid metropolis, "beautiful for situation—the joy of the whole land." Thither, for many a century, when Belfast was only a village, the counties and towns of Ireland sent up their representatives to make laws for the whole kingdom. There was the fountain head of legislation and jurisdiction; and thence went forth the ermined judges, itinerating east, west, north, and south. There was the throne of the national executive, and the seats of all the great national institutions. From all parts of the Island, our population of all classes are perpetually streaming into Dublin. Its present importance, in this respect, is sufficiently indicated by the number of railroads that are to find their centre in it, branching all over the kingdom. In fact, all our laws, usages, and customs, tend to make Ireland one compact, undivided KINGDOM, and Dublin its capital—the centre of unity—the heart, whose pulsations throb to the remotest extremities. Let the lungs, then, have free play—let the oxygen of liberty purify the blood of the body politic—let prosperity enrich it—let an independent will, ruling through the legislature, control it, and let Ireland's presiding genius and her guiding wisdom be equal to her physical force.

X. "But, Great Britain will never grant it, but, on the contrary, will resist it even to civil war."

If this objection were admitted to be unanswerable, it would supersede all others. Wherefore should we adduce our strong arguments to show the benefit of the measure to both countries, if England will not listen to them, but routs them all with the *ultima ratio* of tyrants, the decisive logic of the bayonet? While we are mustering arguments, she is mustering soldiers. We appeal to the law of justice, she to the law of conquest. We point to our captured rights, "which enrich not her, and make us poor, indeed;" but she, the boasted champion of civil and religious liberty, the model of constitutional government, lays her hand upon her sword, and, reddening with indignation, exclaims—"By this sword I won them, and with this sword I will defend them."

She speaks thus, conscious of her overwhelming advantages. She knows that Ireland is at her feet in bonds! She has her police, her

standing armies, and her armed steamers, panting for active service : her innumerable public functionaries, and bigoted partizans, with all power in their hands, among us and about us. Hence her bravery, her mingled threats and ridicule. Exulting in her giant's strength, she seems determined "to use it like a giant."

A calm thinker and close observer has said, that the most powerful argument with Britain, is the *argumentum ad ventrem* ; and, accordingly, the North British Review has said, that her Foreign Secretary turned informer to the petty tyrant of Naples, and consented to open letters and forge seals, in order to gain a few thousands a-year by a favourable tariff. She seems to think that the *argumentum ad servum* is the one for Ireland. It is said that an insurgent army of slaves, though they would face the sword and the cannon, will disband and fly, if their former drivers only shake their whips at them. England seems to think Irishmen made of such metal ! Therefore, she shakes her gory whip in their faces ! She says, in effect—what you demand is right : I cannot deny that it is constitutional ; yet, I am determined to slaughter you in hundreds of thousands rather than do it !

Yet, this is a species of argument that may be carried too far. The wrath of an insulted nation is terrific ! What is discipline against the rush of the avalanche, or the burning flood of the volcano ? To meet a sober and a reasoning people—so strong in numbers and so stung with wrong—standing on the constitution, and respectfully demanding rights, *without which, allegiance is slavery, and taxation, tyranny*—to meet such a people with nothing more rational or Christian than the point of the sword, or the mouth of the cannon, is to teach them a most dangerous lesson—to set them a bad, and, it may be, a fatal example. This is what makes them calculate the chances of an European war. This wakes up dark and terrible passions, which, hovering like birds of prey, snuff the battle-field in the distance. It makes them listen attentively and patiently, while the unseen hand of Providence turns over the rustling leaves of destiny, till it opens a chapter in British history, written in blood ! It is a fearful object on which, wantonly and mockingly, to turn the hopes of a hungry nation !

It is easy for men, gloating in carnal ease, "pride and fulness of bread," confident in the exuberance of their wealth and the *prestige* of their power, to ridicule the aspirations of the Irish people as mere puling *sentimentality*—as if there could be no stern purpose or fierce energy—no real heroic manhood, nourished by national enthusiasm—or as if the good humour of the Irish character, playing incongruously

on the very face of agony—like the setting sun smiling on a thunder-cloud—argued nothing but a despairing imbecility, that might be for ever safely scorned. God grant that this mistake may be cleared up, ere any *further* measures be taken to make that thunder-cloud “explode!”

What is the pretext for these insane and atrociously wicked threats of civil war and conquest? Why, it is alleged that if Ireland had her own parliament she would revolt from the British crown, and dismember the empire. What an idle fear is this! Would two millions of Protestants and seven millions of Catholics agree to forswear their allegiance, and prefer another Sovereign to VICTORIA? Would the barren honour of having a native King or President, pay for the revolution it *must* cost, the expense it would entail, and the perpetual peril to which it would expose the nation? Were the loyalty of Ireland as cold and feeble as it is earnest and strong, could she be so infatuated as to make her green plains again the battle-field between England and some pretender to the Irish throne? Is it already forgotten, that this country never was so loyal, as when her parliament was independent and her citizens were armed? Have our rulers yet to learn from history, that an enfranchised, trusted, and protected people have never yet been traitors in the council, dastardly in the field, or seditious in the street? Popular treason springs up only in the soil which tyranny has ploughed—if it “sows the wind,” it must expect to “reap the whirlwind.”

Is it not humiliating in the extreme to this country, and a deep disgrace to England, that we are watched in time of peace by a vast military force, and that our country is studded with “puny fortifications?” Is not this the very way to make the people *separate in heart*? Lord Stanley, according to his own harsh and violent nature, says that “the government must be feared in order to be loved.” He is but a poor philosopher, or he would know that this passion which all tyrants delight to inspire, is much more likely to be the parent of hatred than of love. The sure way to prevent the very thought of separation, is to grant us our Parliament. Contentment, prosperity, grateful and generous contributions to the necessities of the empire, would be the speedy result, the happy and lasting fruit of justice to Ireland. Then her ardent loyalty would be embalmed in disinterested love to the Sovereign, the intercourse with whom would be gratifying and honourable, because maintained through the medium of *our own* government; and the constitution would not be outraged by the breathing of ministerial animosity into speeches from the throne.

In a wise and manly speech delivered by W. Smith O'Brien, Esq.,



M. P., in the Repeal Association, on the 23rd December, I find the following sentences :—" We are told, indeed, by the press and by the statesmen of England, that although every man in Ireland should unite in demanding Repeal, the Union should still be maintained. They threaten to go to war with us rather than consent to Repeal. Now, I do not know any argument, so likely to convert the anti-Repealers to our cause as this arrogant menace. \* \* \* No man can contemplate the present position of European affairs, without feeling that the destinies of the British empire are in our hands! If Louis Philippe were dead—a fleet of steamers on the French coast, ready to transport 50,000 men to the shores of England—do you suppose that the Irish arm will not then be wanted. We shall then have it in our power to dictate our own terms. Those terms, in peace or war, are the restoration of our legislature. I trust that will be obtained without any collision between the two countries. I believe it will—I know it may; I know it ought; but this I will say, that if collision does take place, it will be the fault of England, and not of Ireland."

Perhaps, an English reader may be disposed to make a large deduction from the force of this language, because it proceeds from an Irish patriot, and one too, who has hereditary reasons for feeling keenly the degradation of his country. If so, I shall refer him to a certain prophet of his own, Henry Brougham. Long ere his too susceptible nature imbibed Toryism from the Woolsack, and his head was turned by the weight of the Chancellor's wig, when discussing in parliament "the misrule and oppression exercised by England over the Irish people, \* \* \* which, imposed the fetters of a foreign jurisdiction over the administration of justice itself," he spoke in the following terms, with which I conclude this chapter :—

"Ireland with a territory of immense extent, with a soil of almost unrivalled fertility, with a climate more genial than our own, with an immense population of strong-built hardy labourers—men suited alike to fill up the ranks of our armies in war, or for employment at home in the works of agriculture or manufactures—Ireland with all these blessings, which Providence has so profusely showered into her lap, has been under our stewardship for the last 120 years; but our solicitude for her has appeared *only in those hours of danger*, when we apprehended the possibility of her joining our enemies, or when, having no enemy abroad to contend with, *she* raised her standard, perhaps, in despair, *and we trembled for our own existence!* It cannot be denied, that the sole object of England has been to render Ireland a *safe neighbour*. We have been stewards over her for this long period of time. I repeat, that we shall one day have to give an

account of our stewardship—a black account it will be, but it must be forthcoming. What have we done for the country, which we are bound to aid, to protect, and to cherish? In our hands, her population seems a curse to her rather than a blessing. They are a wretched, suffering, and degraded race—without a motive for exertion—starving in the midst of plenty. \* \* \* In England justice is delayed, but, thank heaven, it can never be sold. In Ireland it is sold to the rich, refused to the poor, and delayed to all. It is in vain to disguise the fact—it is in vain to shun the disclosure of the truth. We stand, as regards Ireland, on the brink of a precipice! \* \* \* I am backed in what I say by the spirit of the wisest laws—by the opinions of the most famous men in former ages. If I err, I err in company with the best judgments of our own time, I err with the common sense of the whole world, with the very decrees of Providence to support me. *We are driving six millions of people to despair, to madness!* \* \* \* The greatest mockery of all—the most intolerable insult—the course of peculiar exasperation—against which I chiefly caution the house, is the undertaking to cure the distress under which she labours, by anything in the shape of new penal enactments. IT IS IN THESE ENACTMENTS ALONE THAT WE HAVE EVER SHOWN OUR LIBERALITY TO IRELAND! She has received penal laws from the hands of England, almost as plentifully as she has received blessings from the hands of Providence! What have these laws done? Checked her turbulence, but not stifled it. The grievance remaining perpetual, the complaint can only be postponed. We may load her with chains, but in doing so, we shall not better her condition. By coercion we may goad her on to fury; but by coercion we shall *never break her spirit*. She will rise up and break the fetters we impose, and arm herself for deadly violence with the fragments.”\*

\* Lord Brougham's Speeches, vol. 4, p. 45.

## CHAPTER XV.

## RESTORATION OF THE IRISH CONSTITUTION.

“Norway received a new and liberal constitution, and has started with the freshness of youth,—a new nation, as it were, called suddenly into life, from among the slumbering feudal populations of the North. Sweden received a new dynasty, and slumbers on amidst ancient institutions and social arrangements of darker ages.”—LAING.

THE British constitution is, perhaps, above all others, “*a bundle of usages* !” The extraordinary people who have grown up under it to unprecedented power and greatness, ever aiming instinctively at utility and practical results, calculated to meet the *present* emergency, are peculiarly intolerant of theories. In politics especially they have a kind of antipathy to abstract principles.

Indeed, custom is in every nation, to a very great extent, the guide of life and the standard of morals. In religion, multitudes without faith, do, habitually and mechanically, the very things that others do, intelligently, through faith. It is so in civil government. The masses never will be led away from the old beaten path, by the light of the most brilliant speculation, although *obvious* and *pressing interest* may induce them to deviate gradually into a better way. Therefore, if we are to make our appeal to England successfully, we should take with us the words of one who knew its people well :—“ I am not,” said Edmund Burke, “ obliged to go to the rich treasury of the fertile framers of imaginary commonwealths—not to the Republic of Plato—not to the Utopia of More—not to the Oceana of Harrington. It is before me. It is at my feet, and the rude swain treads daily on it with his clouted-shoon. I only wish you to seize, for the theory, the ancient constitutional policy of this kingdom in regard to representation, as that policy has been declared in Acts of Parliament ; and as to the practice, to return to that mode which experience has marked out to you as best.”\*

\* On Conciliation with America.



In our constitutional controversy with England, it is very important to have a *definite object*; and that it should commend itself not only to the good sense, but even to the habits and prejudices of the English people, among whom we have many true friends. With this object in view, there is something even in a *name*. Federalism has a republican sound. True, the thing itself is good; and in speaking of it, we may well adopt the language of Sismondi, and exclaim:—

“Honneur aux nations libres qui cherchent dans le lien fédératif non seulement une défense contre les agressions étrangères, mais aussi une garantie contre leurs propres passions, contre l'égarement de l'ambition, contre l'ivresse du succès!”

The history of such nations is, of all others, the most interesting and illustrious. But an *immense superiority* in one power, adding to its ascendancy the right of *conquest*, seems fatal to federal justice.

It is true, also, that the principles of federalism are bound up in the usages of the British constitution. The ancient English parish was a little republic in itself. The county was a confederation of parishes for more general purposes; while the representatives of the counties and corporations together made the great congress of the nation. The empire, too, is a vast confederation of conquered kingdoms and provinces, of which England is the head. Still “federalism” and “congress” are not English words, nor are they pleasing to English ears. Surrounded by anti-monarchical and even anti-British associations, they would encounter antipathy among the English, and win very little sympathy among the Irish. Talk to *these* of the “KING, LORDS, AND COMMONS OF IRELAND,” and you will thrill their souls; but you cannot conjure with Federalism!

Fully to carry out the federal system, great changes should be made in the British Parliament. The national legislation should be separated from the imperial; and England and Scotland should have their separate parliaments as well as Ireland. Now, it is quite certain that England *will* not be “put about” in this manner. Antiquity has given an awful *prestige* to parliament as it is; and though overwhelmed by an enormous mass of business, accumulating every year from all parts of an unwieldy empire, yet would the English aristocracy endure anything rather than make the change required. The formation of two new imperial houses, whether called a congress or not, is an undertaking we need never expect. If originated in England, the question might, perhaps, be entertained, though not carried; but coming from *Ireland*, and for Ireland's sake, it would be scouted with indignation, as an impertinence worthy of stripes! Besides, from the complexity and delicacy of the arrangements, it is a change which

could not be made in a *panic*. But the Repeal of the Union is one that could, and *would*!

The resistance of England to an imperial congress would not arise from national pride and prejudice merely, but from the strongest self-interest. She has in parliament a large majority over Ireland and Scotland put together. All measures of colonial and foreign policy are, therefore, framed according to her sovereign will. *She* rules the empire. Ireland, particularly, has no influence at all in her councils. But if this country and Scotland were fairly represented in an imperial senate, they would break up this ascendancy, or, at all events, disturb it unpleasantly, and exercise a control which she will never suffer, and acquire a power which she will never surrender.

This being the case, nothing would remain, on the federative plan, to Ireland, but the anomaly of being represented in Dublin and also in London. She would presume to make laws in the British Parliament for Great Britain, when she would not allow it to make laws for her. This is an invidious position which she does not desire, to which she could not attain, and if attained, it would bring with it more inconvenience than advantage. For simplicity, we should then have complexity, if not confusion, in our political arrangements. We must elect two sets of representatives, the more *honourable* sent to London to be dazzled by the wealth and splendour of that huge and gorgeous capital;—to be flattered, intrigued with, and corrupted at the imperial court;—permanently entangled, perhaps, with British connexions, and completely alienated from their native land. Or if they returned, it would be to look down on Dublin and its parliament as little, paltry, and contemptible. In this way, the worst evils of absenteeism would be perpetuated, though somewhat limited in their range. This division of our legislature, and *diversion of the national mind*, would not work well. It would certainly lower the influence and respect of the domestic branch of the parliament. There would then be a far higher prize for ambition in another land, possessing already too many attractions to our countrymen. To this the Irish nation should not be a party.

Why should she? What could she gain by it? To be sure, there are several departments of government in which she would have some voice—such as the colonies, our foreign relations, the tariff, the army and navy, &c. As to the first, we want no power over the colonies. All of them that are large enough should have free legislatures of their own. Some of them would confer greater benefit on these kingdoms as independent nations, in friendly alliance, and with free trade, than they do now. Lord Brougham says, “the government and defence

of Canada alone cost us more than half a million a-year, independent of the million and a half which we have expended on the Rideau canal, and between two and three millions on *fortifications*, uselessly spent! I speak," says he, "on the authority of a minister of the crown (Sir H. Parnell) who has recorded his opinion of the burden we sustain in holding such possessions. Besides all this, we have to pay 55s. duty on the excellent timber of the Baltic, in order that we may be compelled to use the bad timber of Canada, at a higher price, on a 10s. duty."\*

All that we require is liberty to trade with the colonies on the same terms as England, which she could not think of refusing now in the nineteenth century as she did in the eighteenth.

The foreign relations need give us no trouble except so far as tariffs are concerned. And with these our own parliament could deal, if Britian in her negotiations, should neglect our interests. We would, of course, have our own police, and national militia, and so much of a standing army as would be requisite. In such a case we need fear nothing from invasion. Mr. Laing has satisfactorily accounted for the facility with which a few northmen conquered a nation in the middle ages, on the principle, that THE PEOPLE were mostly serfs, and cared little if their tyrannical masters were defeated and degraded. What had they to fight for? Give the Irish their rights—let all the citizens of good character be formed, as Mr. Grey Porter recommended, into a militia and occasionally drilled; and while their patriotic uniform of orange and green will soon cover and extinguish all sectarian and party distinctions, inspiring self-respect, mutual confidence, and brotherly feeling, you may laugh at invasion. And if England should ever need our assistance, 50,000 swords would instantly fly out of their scabbards in her defence. With such a constituency the Irish Parliament would be treated with profound respect! It would not be a bad plan to confine the militia to the *electors*.

As to the currency, revenue, &c., every chance of collision on these points could be obviated by arrangements mutually made at first, so as to produce harmony and good feeling between both nations. At all events, I am quite persuaded that *our* interests in all such matters could be far more effectually guarded by our PARLIAMENT in Dublin than by our *representatives* in London. An Irish House of Commons would command complete attention, where mere Irish members, straggling over to England would be treated with neglect and contempt.

England will expect us to contribute our share to the imperial

\* Lord Brougham's Speeches.



expenditure, reserving, of course, the constitutional right of stopping the supplies, as an ultimate remedy against injustice. There is no fear that any British government will ever do, in Ireland, what a Whig government did a few years ago in Canada—*i. e.*, first grant the power of withholding the supplies in order thereby to obtain a redress of grievances, and then, when they were stopped accordingly, send a military force to break open the chest, and seize on the public treasure. This rash act was followed by rebellion, and rebellion was followed by the elevation of its ringleaders to the highest offices in the state. This is certainly not a very tempting precedent. On the whole I think the nation has acted wisely in having nothing to do with the federal system, if system it may be called, when no feasible plan has been submitted to the public. For in this chapter I have been considering the highest scheme of federalism, not that which has been advocated by Mr. Sharman Crawford, whose talents, integrity, and great respectability would have won for it the approbation of many, if it did not fall far below what the nation has a right to demand, and must sooner or later obtain. Certainly a subordinate, retail, or huxtering parliament could never make Ireland “great, glorious and free,” a consummation which both he and Mr. Grey Porter desire as ardently as any of us.

We have seen how Burke spoke of the IRISH CONSTITUTION. The forms and vital spirit survived the convulsions of civil war. It was respected even by usurpation, was restored with the Restoration, and established by the Revolution in 1688, as all good men hoped—“*for ever.*” It was subsequently destined to demonstrate its power to regenerate the nation, though but for a brief period, and when completely paralysed at one side, by the torpedo of religious intolerance. This constitution was immolated at the Union by means the most atrocious. We demand its *restoration*. We ask for no visionary changes—we want to submit no wild theories of government to perilous experiment. We petition not for favour—we insist on our own—our right.

It has been said, however, that Repeal—“simple Repeal”—would restore all the imperfections of the old parliament—its rotten boroughs and corruption. This consequence by no means follows. The *repeal* of the act of 1800, would be but the preamble to a new enactment, restoring and re-establishing our legislature, according to the principles of the *reformed* British constitution, its sister and its model. The *abuses* of the Irish Parliament were *not* the Irish Parliament! They were mere accidents, excrescences, pernicious appendages. We grant that its robes were greatly soiled by contact with English corruption.

But an institution and its costume are as different things as a man and his dress. Doubtless filthy garments will have a considerable moral influence on the spirit and bearing of him who is obliged to wear them. But even if they should convey into his system contagion and death, it does not follow that, if Providence raised him again from the dead, he must retain the same infected clothes. The resurrection of Lazarus would have been a very imperfect blessing if he had been doomed to carry about with him ever after not only his grave-clothes, but the disease of which he died! But the Lord said—“Loose him and let him go!”

We ask the Imperial Parliament to roll away the stone from the mouth of the sepulchre, *i. e.* repeal the Act of Union. For the Parliament of Ireland is not dead but sleepeth. Let the awful sleeper come forth! Fresh air, fresh blood, freedom and exercise will do the rest. It can soon be dressed anew according to the fashion of *reform*. All this is simple, natural, and intelligible. The constitution of England in the days of Gatton and old Sarum, was essentially the same that it is now in the days of Manchester and Leeds. It has gone through a hydropathic process: wrapt in the wet sheets of Reform, by Lord Grey, the political Priesnitz—it has sweat off its radical impurities—washed its face, got better diet and more room for the development of its energies.

How preposterous, then, is it to argue that Repeal would carry us back to the state of things when Bannow, Clonmines, and Carysfort returned their members to parliament! Such nonsense is as rank as the corruption which it says must needs be resuscitated.

Three hundred members are not too many to represent a population of nine millions. The Parliament of Norway, with little more than one million inhabitants, is composed of about one hundred, for the number varies according to the population of the places represented. These three hundred can easily be distributed over the kingdom; according to the claims of the counties and towns respectively, which may be adjusted on the principles of the Reform Bill; to facilitate which a schedule has been proposed and published by the Repeal Association. In his letter of October 2nd, 1844, Mr. O’Connell says—“Taking up this English basis, (*i. e.* population,) the simple Repealers submit that there ought to be in Ireland 173 county members. Of these Antrim would have 6, Armagh 5, Fermanagh 5, Londonderry 5, Tyrone 6, Down 7, Monaghan 5, Cavan 5, Donegal 6; total for Ulster, 50. I mention these particulars regarding Ulster to show that in our proposal complete justice is done to the Protestant pro-

vince, upon the same scale precisely with the other provinces. There being thus 173 members allotted to the counties, there remain for the towns and cities 127, of which, for example, four are allocated to Belfast, four to Limerick, and two to the Dublin University."

So much for the Commons. The House of Lords is to be restored in all its integrity. When Norway declared itself independent in 1814, it had not only to frame a constitution, to erect a parliament, and define its powers without any previous model in their own, or, indeed, in any country, but also to construct an *executive* suited to their wants and circumstances. Happily for us the forms and offices of administration, still in a great measure remain; and we should need but a few more functionaries to carry on the government efficiently. For example, we have:—1. The Viceroy; 2. The Privy Council; 3. The Lord High Chancellor; 4. The Secretary of State; 5. The Attorney-General; 6. The Solicitor-General, &c.

We should want a Chancellor of the Exchequer and a Board of Trade. We have a Board of National Education. Indeed, with some few supplemental appointments, we have the frame-work of government ready at hand, to execute the will of the legislature, for the benefit of the Nation; and it is much better to adhere to the accustomed forms.

In issuing the proposal for Prize Essays, the Committee of the Association judiciously directed attention to

#### THE UNION BETWEEN SWEDEN AND NORWAY.

The candid consideration of this subject is calculated to convey the most important and interesting instruction, not only to those who, like the Irish, are struggling for their constitutional rights, and vindicating the claims and capability of the people for self-government, but also to the friends of civil liberty in all lands. It will furnish material aid to us in suggesting the means of preventing dangerous collisions between the two houses of parliament, as well as between the two kingdoms.

Norway, Sweden, and Denmark were united under one crown in 1397. This Union was not cordial; Sweden was reluctant and disaffected, and, finally, separated in 1520. Denmark and Norway, however, remained united till 1814. Though the government of the former country was despotic, yet so mild was it, and so respectful to the free customs and independent spirit of the people of Norway, that the habits of local self-government, which belonged to the Scandinavian people in the remotest ages, continued in considerable force



down to the violent disruption effected by the tyranny of the Holy Alliance, contrary to the wishes and feelings of both nations.

It became a great object with England and the other powers allied with her against France, to get the King of Sweden to join in the league. To induce him to do this, they offered him a million sterling, which England paid! But this was not enough. He got also the island of Gaudaloupe; but he was not satisfied without the kingdom of Norway into the bargain! But how could this be given? Norway belonged to the King of Denmark, and was no more England's to give, than Rome or Peking. But, perhaps, the people of Norway themselves were anxious to get free from Denmark, and to be united to Sweden? Exactly the reverse. They were quite happy in their existing connexions, and for good reasons, they regarded the Swedes as their bitter and hereditary enemies—a Union with whom was most abhorrent to their national feelings. No matter! Though England was then fighting, and spending Irish blood, and treasure too, in defence of legitimacy—she scrupled not to rend the kingdom of Norway from the Danish throne, and to hand it over to him of Sweden!—Such was her sense of justice, consistency, and national honour! The writer of the article *Norway*, in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, justly calls this “one of the foulest stains on the escutcheon of Great Britain.” The King of Sweden, in consideration of getting Gaudaloupe, Norway, and one million sterling of British money, (part of that national debt for which Ireland is mortgaged by the Union,) entered into the *holy* alliance, by treaty, on March 3, 1813.

The Norwegians, however, had no notion of being handed over like slaves or sheep to an owner they hated; and, accordingly, they at once declared themselves an independent nation, and elected the son of their former monarch as their king. The Swedish sovereign then entered their territory at the head of an army to take possession—and England blocked the Norwegian ports to starve that brave people into subjection to usurping tyranny. The fighting commenced, and much blood was shed. But the state of Europe required that the contest should be speedily terminated. The result was that a free constitution was conceded to the Norwegians, provided they accepted the Swedish monarch for their king.

They did so. Their representatives met. A committee was appointed to prepare a constitution, and after four days' deliberation (on materials, no doubt, which had previously been the subject of much thought with some of their patriots) they produced the plan of a constitution and a system of government developed in all its details, the most perfect which has ever been reduced to practice in any nation.

This constitution was guaranteed to them by Great Britain and the other allied powers. And indeed to do England justice it should have been mentioned, that when she was generously giving away what did not belong to her, she kindly put in a word for the poor Norwegians, expressing a wish that their new king would have a due regard to their "happiness and liberty!" This reminds one of the advice given by good old Isaac Walton to his angler, as to the most humane manner of impaling a worm—"handle it tenderly," said he, "as if you had a kindness unto it!"

However, as the Norwegians were a people likely to fight it out with their oppressors, they got, on March 17, 1814, "a constitution of their own framing—a legislature of their own electing, without being interfered with by any foreign authority, and laws of their own making and administering. In short, Norway remained a pure democracy in all but the name."\* The purity of the democracy arose from a singular circumstance in their history. They never had a law of *Primogeniture*. Property there is all udal or allodial. The feudal system never cursed their soil with its slavish principles; the Norwegians were never serfs; their landed proprietors were never vassals. Each man holds his property (as they proudly express it) by the same right as the king his crown. Their rights were never granted. They were always their own, natural, unalienated, and underived. In Ireland, with nine millions of population, there are only about 10,000 proprietors. In Norway, with about one million, there are 41,656. How vast must be the moral effect of such a distribution of the landed property. "*Property is power.*" But such is its tendency to accumulate in the same hands, such is the self-respect and the decent family pride it inspires, that holdings have not been subdivided to the extent that might have been anticipated, nor to any extent injurious to the wealth of the country.

They had, however, an hereditary nobility till 1821, when they abolished it as a sort of anomaly in their system. This they were enabled to do through a peculiarity in their constitution, (to which I shall advert just now;) though the king came in person with 6,000 soldiers to overawe them—producing thereby a most alarming excitement, which was terminated by the interference of the Russian and American ministers.

Mr. Laing, who resided in Norway, whither he went for the purpose of studying the institutions of a nation, which in the middle ages was the store-house of conquerors, and now enjoys more political

\* Encyclopedia Britannica.

liberty, than any other in Europe, gives us full and interesting information on this subject, particularly in the closing chapters of his two works, *A Residence in Norway*, and *Travels in Sweden*. I shall notice several points in order:—

1. The suffrage in Norway is almost universal, for which they were prepared by the extensive diffusion of property, and the habits of independence which it produces. Almost every man there has a stake in the country.

2. There is no property qualification for members of parliament, and yet the most respectable, intelligent and upright men are almost invariably elected.

3. All the members are paid for their attendance in the national assembly. As a consequence the public business is diligently and faithfully attended to. The payment, however, is little more than adequate to meet their necessary expenses while residing at Christiana. They are not, therefore, obliged to compensate themselves, as with us, by jobbing and patronage.

4. There is a general election every three years, when the storting or parliament meets, *suo jure*, in virtue of the constitution, and sits three months for the transaction of business, but no longer, unless with the king's permission.

5. The king may call an extraordinary meeting of the storting for a special purpose, but in that case they can meddle with no other business.

6. The first thing the storting does when it meets, is to elect its own president, or speaker, and a secretary; and this is repeated every week, so jealous are they, lest there should be the least bias in the chairman, leading him to put matters before the meeting unfairly; or in the secretary, leading him to give a wrong turn to any thing in entering it on the journals of the house.

7. The storting then elects the Lagthing, which answers to our House of Lords. It consists of one fourth of the whole number of representatives, and includes of course men of the greatest wisdom and experience. These sit in an adjoining chamber, which opens into the lower house by folding doors. The portion that remains in this lower house is called the Odelsting, and answers to our House of Commons.

8. In this lower house *all* measures must originate. When considered there, they are sent to the upper chamber, where they are approved, altered, or rejected.

9. The king has not an *absolute veto*, but only a *suspensive negative*, upon the acts of the legislature.

10. Should a bill, which he objects to and negatives, be passed in



*three successive parliaments, it becomes law at once, without the royal assent.* It was by virtue of this principle of their constitution, they abolished the aristocracy, contrary to all the efforts of Sweden to uphold it.

11. All public officers, from the highest to the lowest, hold their situations for life, and are responsible to the storting alone. The crown cannot dismiss them unless they are convicted of crime, nor can they be removed from place to place without their own consent; nor have their salaries reduced, or their labours increased, without compensation. Every office is open to public competition. The man best qualified must get the appointment; and to secure this object, and guard against favouritism, or nepotism, an account must be kept in a book of every candidate's testimonials, claims, and qualifications, so that parliament and the public may be satisfied that there is no foul play.

12. What is more remarkable, the *judges* are responsible for their decisions. If any one has been injured by a wrong judgment, proceeding from rashness, haste, or ignorance, the judge is bound to make good his loss out of his own pocket. He has the right, however, to appear in person, and state the grounds on which he has proceeded. According to this law, the Lord Chief Justice Pennefather, and his brethren should have appeared before the House of Lords, to answer for their sentence against O'Connell and his fellow-prisoners; and should have paid these patriots the damages due for an illegal imprisonment of three months. If *corruption*, or any dishonest bias is proved against the judge, *he is degraded* from his office. With such regulations, it is needless to say that justice is administered in Norway with the most perfect purity. The incompetent creatures that creep up upon the bench here, or the violent partizans that are thrust upon it, by ministerial patronage, would not dare to incur the hazard of such a position in Norway. Happy people that live under such just laws. No wonder the country is so free from crime; while Sweden, with its swarming aristocracy, is the most criminal, the most *shamefully criminal* country in Europe!

13. No change can be made in the Norwegian constitution, in the same parliament in which it is introduced. Before any such question can be decided, there must be a general election, by which the will of the nation can be fully ascertained. But, so justly proud are the people of their incomparable constitution, that they will not suffer it to be touched even to remove slight defects.

14. No member of the executive has a seat in parliament.

Never was any system better framed to secure popular rights, and

justice, and order at the same time. Never were the capabilities of the people for self-government so admirably illustrated. Here is a proof that they can be trusted with power with perfect safety. But, the greatest wisdom of all is shown in the insuperable barrier raised against the effects of court intrigue, patronage, and corruption in every form. A *coup d'état* in Paris, will revolutionise France in a single day, and wholly extinguish its constitution, such as it is; because all power is centralized in the capital; the liberty of the nation is within the king's grasp, and he can strangle it in a moment. Just in proportion as this system of centralization prevails in any country, are the people unsafe. But, in Norway, freedom is rooted in every part of the soil, and cannot possibly be extirpated, except by *the sword*.

This fact was illustrated in a most striking manner in 1824, when, in violation of the faith of treaties, the king was induced by his aristocratic advisers, to attempt to carry out his long cherished scheme of completely amalgamating the two kingdoms, by assimilating Norway to Sweden, and reducing it to the condition of Poland or Ireland. Accordingly, the *storting* was violently and arbitrarily dissolved by the king, without any reason assigned, in the midst of their deliberations—in the hope of an *émeute* that might furnish an excuse for employing the military, and so destroying the constitution—something like the Clontarf proclamation. But the people were quiet—the functionaries were all faithful to their country; the king took nothing by his motion, and soon seeing the folly of his conduct, he called the parliament together again. They calmly began at their unfinished business, where they had been interrupted, and went on as if nothing had happened, save only that they found their agent in Copenhagen had neglected to enter a protest in the council against this outrage on their rights, for which he was impeached. Are not these Norwegians a *noble* people? Are not their history and government an admirable study for the people of Ireland at the present moment? They are *true* men, steady, sincere, honest, determined, persevering! Would that we had their firmness, their unity, their stern devotion to principle; their calm, unvapouring independence of spirit! Then our government would not hope to subdue a nation by crushing a leader, or by intriguing at the court of Rome. But, even as it is, and as we are, their hopes are vain. Our people have not *all* the virtues which self-government alone can nourish to maturity; but they are fast acquiring them—and hence the profound anxiety of our rulers.

How far can we derive aid from the Norwegian model in reconstructing our own parliament, so as to keep as near as possible to the recognized principles and usages of the British constitution?

1. We learn the necessity of *localizing political power*. The centralizing tendencies of our government must be met and counteracted in every possible way, consistent with the constitution. This must be done in the Poor-Law Boards, which have recently been contending with the commissioners for a great principle, though the matter at issue was only the appointment or dismissal of a clerk. The boards should secure for themselves as much power as possible ; and in order to make this power the less invidious, and give the less excuse for the central authorities to interfere with it, majorities on these boards should most scrupulously guard against anything sectarian or partial. Reconcilement and unity among themselves should be anxiously aimed at, in order that Protestants and Catholics may get the habit of acting together as *IRISHMEN*, for Irish objects. The same should take place in the Corporations. Restricted as are their privileges, they are, in fact, little parliaments ; and the effort of all their members should be to make them the nurseries of patriotism, the normal schools of self-government. They should not rest till they are placed on a perfect level with the English Corporations, especially as to the appointment of magistrates. Grand Juries should be *elected* by the payers of county-cess. This is a vital point. The present system is monstrous ! We are *taxed* to an enormous extent, without representation ! We have no voice in the disposal of our own money in what most intimately concerns us. It is astonishing that this glaring anomaly has been borne so long. Do what you will to check the aristocracy, they will still have an undue and injurious influence in this country. But to allow them, without any responsibility to the people, to impose taxes, and appropriate the public money, to any extent, and in any manner they please, is to show ourselves unfit for the British constitution. Let us then have *county reform* ! Grand Juries must be elected by the ratepayers ; the sheriffs by the grand juries ; and the judges should, by all means, relinquish this power. Let the elected grand jury choose the high-sheriff, returning three names, as the judges do now, and leaving to the Queen, through her deputy, to select one of them.

2. It is folly to expect well-regulated liberty in this country, so long as the landlords retain their present power over the people. I believe the feudal system of land-tenure is one of our greatest curses. The landlords, however, *have* rights of property most oppressive and degrading, and we must only make the most of a system which we cannot abolish. All efforts to raise the condition of the Irish people, to produce real peace and prosperity, and to harmonize the various classes of society, will be comparatively ineffectual, till the law of



*primogeniture* is repealed. But while it lasts, we must guard as well as we can against its blighting effects on our political rights. The *elective franchise*, at all events, must be freed from the landlord's power. How is this to be effected? By some alteration in the law, that will either render the giving of leases compulsory, or give the franchise, without a lease. *Registration*, too, must be rendered simple and inexpensive; and electioneering oaths should be utterly abolished. Why should not a receipt for some single tax be sufficient to qualify a man to vote? If it be a principle of the constitution that taxation and representation should go together, what more should be required of a man who is entitled to vote at an election, than a certificate that he has paid his tax?

With regard to the *extension* of the suffrage, I think it would not be wise to make it a necessary preliminary to a Repeal of the Union. We should not rest a single day, however, in our agitation for this extension, till it is equal to that of England, according to our fair proportion. Circumstanced as our people are in regard to the aristocracy; poor, dependant, and often liable to utter ruin, for acting according to conscience, the *ballot* seems absolutely necessary. Were this measure conceded, Ireland would soon send a majority of Repealers to the Imperial Parliament—an object which is now of paramount importance. The people have “pronounced,” the corporations have “pronounced,” but Ireland shall not have regularly and constitutionally, unequivocally and incontrovertibly done so, till a majority of her representatives in parliament demand a local legislature. This is all that now remains to make the appeal of this nation irresistible. “The battle of the *Irish* constitution must be fought at the hustings.”\*

3. The Norwegian Parliament meets only once in three years, and for every session there is a new election. Ours, of course, would require to meet annually; but it should exist only three years, being subject to no dissolution, except at the accession of a sovereign; at all events, four years should be the utmost limit, as in Canada. The people ought not to be left in the dark as to the time of a general election. We have too much depending on the caprice and policy of government. They wish always to have some political sliding-scale, some power in *terrorem*, to work on the passions of party. They ought not to be able to dissolve parliament for any such purpose. Let elections regularly take place every third or fourth year, and the electors can be prepared—can have their votes duly registered, and fit

\* There are only twenty-two pledged Repealers in parliament.

candidates selected. Then the members will hardly have time to wholly forget their professions and pledges ; and they will not feel so independent of their constituents, as to go on voting for six or seven years in opposition to their principles, in disregard of their interests, and in contempt of their wishes and feelings.

4. The *property qualification* of members should be either wholly set aside in the Irish Parliament, or essentially altered. We have seen that in Norway the most respectable men are selected, though any elector is eligible ; and we may see in Scotland, that the property qualification is not at all necessary. In Ireland it would operate most seriously against the liberal interest, on account of the *kind* of title required. If a man have large property, why is it necessary that it should be in land ? If it be in manufactures, or any kind of extensive business, does it not give its owner as good a claim on the suffrages of his countrymen ? Has he no stake in the country ? And is it not of the most beneficial kind, as giving employment to the people ?

Some years ago an excellent man was elected to represent one of our towns ; his rental was far more than sufficient to qualify him, but he was unseated on petition, because his title was not sufficiently *aristocratic* and feudal ; and his opponent, whose property was worth nothing if his debts were paid, was declared to be the member. All that should be required is, that a candidate is to be *bona fide* possessed of property, to enable him to pursue an independent course in parliament, and to save him from the necessity of being a miserable place-hunter. But if any sort of property qualification be required in the Irish Parliament, it should certainly be demanded in the *sons of peers*. Since we must have hereditary legislators, and a law of primogeniture, throwing multitudes of their connexions on the taxes for support, we should, at least, curtail their most extravagant and pernicious privileges as much as possible.

5. It will always be very difficult for the Irish Parliament to maintain its independence, against the enormous influence of Great Britain. This will be exerted principally through our House of Lords. It is useless for us to contend, like the Canadians, for an *elective* legislative council or upper house—our upper house is hereditary. Unhappily, many of its members are far removed from sympathy with the people of this country. As the Lord Primate Beresford said of the church, their “ tastes are eminently English ;” in many cases they are positively and bitterly anti-Irish. They dread every democratic tendency in society—have a morbid fear of the breaking up of their caste—and they would be likely to have their fears,

their pride, and their prejudices continually wrought upon by English *management*. On these accounts, their policy in parliament would, in all likelihood, be inveterately obstructive. This might irritate the nation and lead to disastrous results. What is the remedy?

I think we must here borrow a leaf from the Swedish constitution, and enact that, if a bill pass the House of Commons three years in succession, it shall become the law of the land, though rejected by the Lords, and shall receive the royal assent as a matter of course. This would be an extreme case, for which the occasion might seldom or never arrive. But there might be emergencies in which it would be a very desirable safety-valve. There might be questions which the nation *would* carry at all hazards—to which the lords might entertain conscientious scruples quite insuperable. Would it not then be better for *themselves* to have their consent unnecessary? Had such a principle been embodied in the British constitution, Catholic Emancipation would have been carried many a year before it was, and a world of mischief would have been thus prevented. Without some such provision, I fear the measures of the Irish Commons would be continually swamped.

6. The House of Commons should have a *veto* on every appointment connected with the executive, from the Lord Lieutenant down; expressed, if necessary, by a vote of want of confidence. This will be found as unavoidable as it is constitutional. Irish administrations have almost invariably laboured not for Ireland, but for England—they will always do so, while it is their interest, and this will be as long as appointment and promotion depend on the unchecked will of the English cabinet. We would not unduly limit the prerogative; if we had to do with our Queen directly, such vigilance would not be needed. But, we have to do with her English ministry, to whom we owe nothing, and who, we know very well, would be continually striving to overreach us, and to nullify our rights. If the Queen were left to her own goodness and wise discretion, she would select officers honestly devoted to the good of this country. A Swede holding an important office in Norway, would be regarded as a monstrosity, and might cost the monarch his crown. There is one office, that of stadtholder, which used to be filled by a Swede, but in order to conciliate the nation after the *coup d'état*, a native was appointed. Of course this nation would be much gratified to have the viceregal palace occupied by a popular and patriotic Irishman. But the power of thus pleasing the subjects of this kingdom, might well be placed at the discretion of our gracious Sovereign, and if she were not very ill-advised, she might turn it to excellent account in vastly increasing the devo-



tion of the people to her throne. Oh ! how that loyalty, like the sun in his strength, would dissipate every surmise of separation, if her Majesty would come over every two or three years, to open her parliament in person ! Separation ! If VICTORIA were allowed to be indeed a *Queen* to Ireland, the man who dared to whisper the word, would be scouted as an enemy to his country from one end of the island to the other !

7. Besides the *real and effective* responsibility of our government officers to parliament, it would be necessary to have an Irish minister constantly resident in London, to see that nothing should be either openly or insidiously attempted, against the rights, liberties, or interests of this country. He should be a man of first-rate ability, wisdom, and integrity, and of patriotism absolutely incorruptible.

Thus, without diverging from the constitution, whose principles we would rather carry out to their just consequences ; or obtruding on the English legislature any new-fangled system of government, which, however wise and admirable, would be sure to be covered with odium and ridicule, and would share the fate of the English "*Charter*," it appears to me that we could secure the perfect independency of our parliament, an efficient home government acting in harmony with it, and all combining to attach this great kingdom to the imperial throne by an indissoluble tie—by cords spun out of every Irish heart, and twisted into one mighty bond by the hand of parliament.

## CONCLUSION.

## AN APPEAL TO PROTESTANTS.

“ It cannot be denied that the policy under which this country has for ages been governed, may be set forth in three words—*divide et impera*. The craft of English politicians has divided the people of Ireland into two armies of hostile factionaries; and, under the conventional names of Whig and Tory, we have been hallooed to battle to our own great loss; but to the party gain, sometimes of a Sir Robert Peel, sometimes of a Lord John Russell.”—DR. MAUNSELL.

PROTESTANTS of Ireland, ponder well this most important fact. Dr. Maunsell, the highly-respectable Conservative town councillor, has given utterance to many patriotic and Christian sentiments in his excellent speech on *Rotary Parliaments*. He has also stated some interesting facts, which may be received from him much sooner than from a Liberal or a Repealer.

One of these is, that there never was a time within our recollection when party bitterness was so generally supplanted by good humour; though there may be some among us to whom unfortunately this intelligence is far from being agreeable. No matter; if this vex them may they never have peace till they get ashamed of their evil hearts! Another fact admitted on both sides is, that the substitution of centralization and bureaucracy and commissionerships for local government is a great evil. A third is that Ireland is *not* represented in Westminster. “ It is true,” says Dr. M., “ that 105 gentlemen, calling themselves somewhat indiscriminately Whigs and Tories, undertake to attend there on behalf of certain Irish counties and boroughs. Some of these are lawyers; and they generally do attend with praiseworthy diligence, to entitle themselves, by party services, to seats on the bench of justice! Others are sportsmen and gamblers; and they attend because London is near Epsom and Ascot, and furnishes other conveniences for the use of their proper occupations. A few are gentlemen of fortune and rank in this country; and they undertake parliamentary duties—nay, often diligently vote—because it is their ambition to dine with a minister, or an opposition leader, or

that of their ladies to be admitted within some third-rate circle of London society. \* \* \* The dignity, the rank, and the self-confidence of *provincial* representatives are and must be overwhelmed in that great vortex: and when dignity, rank, and self-confidence are gone, where is the power to represent the interests of others?" Alas! *such* representation is about the most degrading thing Ireland could be afflicted with. But the member who in London would be "an unnoticed, perhaps, a suspected stranger," would in Dublin be "in the position of a gentleman in his own house." Thank God, the din of party is subsiding and common sense is beginning to be heard at last!

Fellow-Protestants, you have submitted long to the humiliation of your country, from the persuasion that English power was the faithful protector of Irish Protestants and Protestantism. Has it been so in reality?

What has been done for Irish Protestants? Have they been preferred, in their own country, to Englishmen and Scotchmen in the distribution of offices? See what your zealous and talented champion *The Evening Mail* says upon the subject:—

"The Queen's cabinet contains not a single Irishman.

"The subordinate offices of the government, with the exception of the petty places assigned to Mr. Emerson Tennent, and two or three more of 'such small deer,' are exclusively held by English and Scotch.

"From all the public departments in Great Britain, Irishmen are excluded, whilst English and Scotch officials shoulder them out of the direction of affairs in their own country.

"Towards the liberal professions the same partial course is pursued; and never was it pursued with a more unvarying monopoly than within the last four years.

"There are legal appointments, however, to which the English Bar puts forward, openly at least, no exclusive claim, yet of which it enjoys the exclusive possession—we mean the high judicial offices in India and the Colonies, not one of which is held by an Irishman of Sir Robert Peel's or Sir James Graham's appointment. The Whigs were better paymasters than the Tories.

"Next (we ought, indeed, to have placed it first)—next comes the church, towards which the Westminster rule is rigidly enforced—namely, that Englishmen are worthy to be set in the highest offices in Ireland, but no Irish clergyman entitled to aspire to the meanest preferment across the Channel—such preferment being in the gift of government. Did any one ever hear of an Irish clergyman being made an English Bishop, or an English Dean? Yet we have had shining lights in our church, whose learning, candour, and eloquence



in the great cause of truth might have been transfused, with much advantage, into the somewhat torpid system of the sister establishment. But had the Ministers who in times past (and not very long past) gave us a Steward, a Law, a Robinson, a Butson, a Bissett, a Cleaver, a Whately, a Laurence, a Mant, and a Lindesay, proposed to take in exchange a few Doctors from Trinity College, we suspect the *non placets* from Oxford would have been infinitely more deafening than a proposition to transplant a Professor or two from Maynooth would be at this present writing.

“There is a class of appointments, however, to which our clergy have an undoubted right to aspire, but of which the Universities of Oxford and of Cambridge have hitherto divided the patronage between them. We allude to the numerous Colonial Bishoprics and their dependent dignities. There is not a single instance of an Irish clergyman having been offered one of those appointments, although, as members and ministers of the United Church of England and Ireland, they have a just and equitable right to be considered in the distribution of such preferments. Amongst the Queen’s chaplains, also, there is not one member of the University of Dublin.

“The difficulty experienced by Irish gentlemen in procuring the promotion of their sons in the Royal Navy, is almost as great as if the gun-room were a cathedral, and every midshipman a golden prebendary.

“Even the Army, which is indebted, in a great degree, for its high renown and pre-eminence to the valour and conduct of Irish gentlemen, is now assuming very much the character of an exclusively British institution. Numerous complaints have reached us from quarters of the highest rank and respectability, of the influence of national partiality at the Horse Guards. Irish gentlemen in vain solicit permission to purchase commissions for their sons. The answer they receive is invariably the same—full of smooth hope and delusive promise, ending in nothing. Month after month, and year after year, pass on, whilst each successive Gazette teems with appointments of the favoured candidates from other parts of the United Kingdom. English and Scotch members of parliament have influence to promote their *protégés*—but if so, it is to the almost entire exclusion of candidates from our side of the water, whose friends belong to the now despised band which mainly contributed to place ministers where they are.”\*

But, perhaps, though thus unkind to the concrete, they are devotedly

attached to the abstract; perhaps the English government has laboured anxiously to sustain Irish Protestantism, from pure love of the truth. Not so. Dr. Maunsell has fully borne out what I have already said upon this subject—indeed, nearly all the organs of Irish Protestantism do the same, so far as the *present* ministry are concerned. “Surely, if the history of the last fifteen years be remembered, no one—not the most sanguine truster in statesmen, can, in his sober moments, fail to see that this establishment is already *doomed*! The consummation may, perhaps, be delayed; but it will no less certainly arrive at last; and when it does come, it will find the Irish Protestants, a *betrayed, weakened, DENATIONALIZED GARRISON OF ENGLAND*, not even possessed of a spoil to mollify their conquerors. To my Protestant brethren, I would then say, *MAKE YOUR TERMS BEFORE THE BREACH IN YOUR BULWARKS BECOMES INDEFENSIBLE!*”\*

You have sworn your members that the Roman Catholic creed is “superstitious and idolatrous.” By a most determined, protracted, and expensive agitation, you put Wellington and Peel into office for the express purpose of protecting Irish Protestantism, and keeping down Popery; and what has been the result? Why, that the “Conservatives” have encouraged “Popery” in a way that the Whigs would never have dared to do! They have given rank to the Roman Catholic prelates above the peers of the realm, and brought them into close connexion with the state, as a preliminary to their endowment. This is not all; though they have sworn that the Pope hath not, and ought not to have any power or authority in these realms, they have been secretly negotiating at Rome for an official connexion with his Holiness, to bring the forsworn power to bear against Irish nationality. To *keep down Ireland*, they courted Protestants, while Protestants could serve their purpose; and to keep down Ireland, they have not the least hesitation in sacrificing Protestantism to the Pope!

You see that they have been playing a foul game with you! Will you not, then, rally round the standard of your country? Listen again to the stanchest and sternest, as well as the most talented organ of Irish Protestantism. The *Dublin Warder* of October 5th speaks as follows:—

“There is no attempt to conceal the disgust with which Irish Protestants regard Peel: no warning—neither the bitter derision and execration of courted Popery—nor yet the widening estrangement and indignant expostulations of betrayed Protestantism have availed to stop, or even to retard, that policy of concession which has now well

\* Dr. Maunsell's speech. Dublin, S. J. Machen.

nigh run the length of its tether, there remaining nothing more to give.

“The church we account as gone—it has but some half dozen years more to exist. The church condemned, what has the Irish Protestant to dread from Repeal? This is a question more easily put than answered. The Roman Catholics have gotten the corporations—the state education of the country—an enlarged grant has increased the effectiveness of Maynooth—Peel has passed a bill recognising the rank and titles of the titular dignitaries—the Popish prelates bid to hope for seats among the imperial peers—the priests are to be paid out of the purse of the commonwealth—and the *præmunire* being abolished, an ambassador at the court of Rome shall acknowledge the jurisdiction of his Holiness the Pope. It is idle, then, to affect to believe that the maintenance of the *Union* is the maintenance of *Protestantism*.

“But spite of its Popish tendencies there never yet was a policy for the government of Ireland so peculiarly *un-Irish* as that of Peel. There never was a time when Irish feelings, and wishes, and interests too, were treated with such supercilious contempt, with such haughty and systematic disregard—never was treatment so galling to a people of spirit and feeling, as that which Peel has bestowed upon Ireland. The insulting contempt of Irish advice and opinion, upon Irish matters, as of course upon all others, extends to all classes of Irishmen equally. Irish law appointments have been made in total ignorance of the Irish bar, and without one word of consultation with the Irish Chief Judges, who have been further and more markedly insulted by the late Irish Courts Bill, which has peremptorily refused them the privilege—in the English bench never disputed—of appointing the officers of their own courts. Irish judges, it seems, cannot be safely trusted with even this much patronage, and the virtuous *English* minister must guide its distribution.”

It is admitted that old Irish parties are now fast dissolving into their elements. New and better combinations will arise. Nationality will attract the scattered *nebulae*, and form once more, in this western region, a glorious luminary to enlighten and guide the nations of the earth. Reflection, I think, will convince you that to resist or put down the Repeal movement is now impossible. It is not a movement with which physical power can grapple. Resistance but increases its momentum. What, then, is your wisdom? To make the best terms possible, without loss of time, for the security of Protestant liberty in the new constitution, and to join in the demand for an Irish Parliament. You will thus most beneficially hasten forward an event



which perhaps you cannot ultimately prevent, and which it is by all means desirable should be obtained with your friendly co-operation, which, indeed, is regarded as a *sine qua non*. In this fact I rejoice, and in taking my leave of the reader, I beg he will forgive me if, in the course of this work, I have unintentionally let fall an expression offensive to the conscience of either Roman Catholic or Protestant. I write under a deep sense of responsibility; I would not have my fellow-countrymen blind to the signs of the times. For the "distress of nations" is sending its many-voiced cries over every sea, and is borne to our ears by every post. It is, doubtless, a very extraordinary state of things. "Its distinctive feature is a grand popular movement, slowly propagating itself through all civilized nations—a revolution of ideas, which is elevating the mass of mankind to importance and power, and, in fact, to the eventual government of the world. It is a revolution which goes alike beyond all former examples in history, and principles in philosophy. None was ever so universal, so profound, or so powerful: all former revolutions have been local, occasional, and sanguinary. In former days, when power has been wrested from its despotic possessor, it has been done only by violent and bloody hands. But now an influence, silent and irresistible, is rising up from the mass of the people, and is stealing from thrones, and principedoms, and hierarchies, their unjust prerogatives; and at the same time, as if by some wonder-working magic, is making their incumbents helpless to resist, and even willing to obey. Potentates are learning a new lesson, and so are the people too.—Before, revolutions have been violent and bloody, from the very weakness of those who have carried them on, from the very uncertainty whether they should succeed. Now, the people are reposing in calm security upon their undoubted strength. What is now presented to the world, is not, as formerly, kingdoms convulsed, or navies wrecked upon the shore, but that tide in the affairs of men, that slow rising and gradual swelling of the whole ocean of society, which is to bear everthing upon its bosom. It is, indeed, an extraordinary fact—reversing, in a striking manner, the usual course of things—that while opinion ordinarily propagates itself from the more educated to the more ignorant classes, the popular cause is now rising and swelling, against the loudest remonstrances of so many superior minds, as if it were indeed an ocean tide against which nothing is destined to prevail."








SUPPLEMENTAL REPEAL ESSAY.

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A PROPOSAL

FOR

THE RESTORATION

OF

THE IRISH PARLIAMENT.

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1845.



# A PROPOSAL

FOR THE

## RESTORATION OF THE IRISH PARLIAMENT.

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*Quicquid delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi.*  
The Monarch's madness is the People's curse.

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THE political and moral world presents to the eye of the philosopher a vast scene, where opposite principles and forces are constantly at war with each other. That the war is perpetual, is a proof, that though the forces on one side may be kept under for a while, yet they are never permanently subdued. The seed scattered by the winds may long lie dormant among rocks or sands, but life is not extinct, for when removed to a suitable soil, it springs up in strength and beauty. So it is with those moral or political principles, which for a time seem to be utterly destroyed. Unseen and forgotten they still live, and on the first opportunity, arise with renewed youth to re-commence the conflict with their ancient rivals. The temporary peace is now followed by the din of war, and the vanquished of yesterday becomes the victor of to-morrow.

That the harmony of the moral as well as of the political world is maintained by this constant struggle, is evident from the dreadful calamities which attend the undisputed victory of one or the other principle. In the mind of the individual, the victory is signalized by the dominion of a single passion, such as love, ambition, or avarice, leading to crime or madness; in the political world, it is marked by the slow wasting of despotism, or the fearful ravings of anarchy; by the awful oppression of inequality, or the disorder and weakness of equality; by the benumbing influence of centralization, or the ruinous dissensions of the local system. The contests between Aristocracy and Democracy, between Inequality and Equality, between the Central and the Local forces, have been going on in every age, and probably will never end; but were they indeed to end, the condition of mankind would be hopeless.



The contest between the Central and the Local forces, though hitherto less observed than that between aristocracy and democracy, has nevertheless been equally real ; and it may be traced in every age, and might be in every country. The characteristics of the two systems may be summed up in a few words.

First, as respects foreign relations, the local system is decidedly opposed to conquest, but favourable to a protracted defence ; while centralization has exactly the opposite tendency. Here, then, it is clear that the former has the advantage ; for defence is better than conquest. Centralization no doubt can make an immense effort for defence as well as for conquest ; but if that effort be unsuccessful, it cannot maintain the struggle against an invader ; whereas the local spirit and local exertions never fail.

Secondly, as respects internal affairs ; centralization promotes order, regularity, uniformity, and peace ; but at the same time it destroys activity and independence among the people, and keeps them in perpetual leading-strings ; while the local system is liable to dissensions, but it creates energy and freedom in thought and deed. The one, in short, is favourable to despotism, the other to liberty ; and if liberty with all its excesses be greatly superior to despotism, then ought we to uphold the local, rather than the central system.

This conclusion is of vast importance, and ought never to be forgotten. To unite the two systems in one harmonious whole, ought, no doubt, to be our grand object, for either alone leads to ruin, to despotism, or to anarchy ; but as in practice we must incline to one rather than the other, it is well to know on which side it is safer to err. Let us then always remember that for national defence, as well as for internal prosperity, the local system is preferable to the central.\*

If we keep this conclusion in mind, we shall be able to form a correct opinion as to the merits of many separate measures, as they are proposed in or out of Parliament. Many measures are brought forward which appear very specious, which seem to promote order, regularity, and peace ; and were we to look no farther, they might command our unqualified support. But the man who dives deeper will consider what may be the hidden principle of any measure, whether it tend to aristocracy or to democracy, to central or to local ascendancy ; he will view it not alone, but along with other measures of the same kind, each apparently as harmless as this ; he will see what the general tendency

\* For a full account of the characteristic qualities of the Central and Local system, see the Author's Political Discourses ; Discourse V.

is, and thus he will form his decision. If, as in the present day, he find a strong bias towards centralization, he will strive against it with all his might, well knowing that centralization leads slowly, perhaps, but surely, to despotism.

These observations naturally suggest themselves in connection with that grand question which now agitates Ireland, the question of Repeal of the Union, and Restoration of the Irish Parliament. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the importance of this question, as that must be evident to all. As in the agitation which preceded Roman Catholic Emancipation, the contest was between the spirit of equality and that of inequality, and in the Reform struggle, between aristocracy and democracy; so here battle is joined between the central and the local powers. It is the third great struggle of the century; and may it, like the former, terminate happily!

The observations already made in favour of local government, in general, sufficiently show what part we feel disposed to take, previous to an inquiry into the merits of the particular change proposed. A measure so favourable to the local system, and so adverse to the prevailing tendency to centralize, as the Restoration of a domestic legislature in Ireland, cannot fail to recommend itself, *a priori*, to all friends of liberty and local institutions. It remains to be seen whether a detailed inquiry shall confirm or remove this prepossession.\*

II. 1. That England has, upon the whole been a highly prosperous, comparatively well governed country, and that Ireland has been just the reverse, are facts generally acknowledged. When we consider the close contiguity of the two, the similarity of climate and productions, and the apparent identity of their Government, this cannot but at first appear a very singular phenomenon. But, on a closer view, surprise will vanish. The identity of Government turns out to be only apparent; for while England really governed herself, much more, at least, than any other country, Ireland was always treated as a conquered province. This fact alone explains the whole mystery, the wealth, order, freedom, and general prosperity of the one, the turbulence, poverty, and slavery of the other. The very causes which maintained the grandeur of England, contributed to the degradation of Ireland; for if the former had been governed despotically, the latter would have been much better

\* The following remark is taken from a paper of undoubted talent, but by no means favourable to Ireland. "It may be laid down as an axiom in economical as well as in political government, that there are more ample resources, and more real strength in an assemblage of states united, with certain differences, under a common head, than in the precise uniformity of such an administration as that of modern France."—*Times*, October 11, 1844.

off. Despotism is equal at least ; not so liberty ; for though a man or a state may like liberty for himself, it by no means follows that he favours it in others. Who are fonder of liberty than the planters of Carolina ? but who are more bent on maintaining slavery ? On the other hand, who is the friend of the Russian serf ? is it not the Emperor himself ? When the tyrant Nabis took the city of Sparta, he set the slaves at liberty ; but when the free Achæans retook the town, they drove them all out. The provinces of the Roman world were better governed under the emperors than under the republic ; and in the last century, the Corsicans preferred the rule of despotic Prussia to that of the free Genoese.

It is easy to trace, in particular measures, the influence of those classes who swayed the government of England. Thus, while, on the one hand, to gratify the agricultural interest, Ireland was prevented from exporting bullocks to Great Britain, at the instigation of the manufacturers, her wrought goods were prohibited on the other : and while she was forbidden to sell her raw wool to any but England, she was debarred from sending her woollens to any country whatsoever. So, the English Puritans, and the modern self-called Evangelicals, excited the government against the Roman Catholics. A despotic government would have neglected the clamours of the agriculturists, manufacturers, and fanatics, and would have treated Ireland as well at least as Great Britain.

The excellence then of the British government for its own people, told nothing in favour of Ireland, so long as the latter was excluded from the pale of the constitution, no more than the free institutions of America tell in favour of the blacks. Nothing, indeed, can be conceived more lamentable than the fate of Ireland, attacked by a neighbour more powerful than herself, which could not quite subdue, nor yet would leave her alone, nor treat her with justice and equality.\* Doomed for ever to be dragged, as it were, at the tail of another nation, even through mire and blood, and to follow the revolutions of the latter, whether she would or not, Ireland was obliged, first by the bayonets of Cromwell, and afterwards by those of William, to forswear her allegiance to sovereigns whom she thought herself bound to obey. The very Revolution which confirmed the liberties of England, only rivetted the chains of the sister island ; and the attachment of the great mass of the people to the religion of their forefathers, was made the excuse for depriving

\* "In a word," said Sir John Davies, "if the English would neither in peace govern them by the law, nor could in war root them out by the sword, must they not be pricks in their eyes, and thorns in their sides, till the world's end ?"



them not only of every political, but almost every social benefit. The nation was ruled by England through the medium of a small minority, who monopolized all the advantages of government, and nearly all the land in the country.

Towards the end of Charles the Second's reign, Roman Catholics were excluded from both Houses of Parliament, and were prohibited from serving either in the civil or military service. After the Revolution, they were forbidden to vote for members of Parliament, to practise the profession of the law, and even to inherit landed property and the Protestant heir of a Roman Catholic holder of land might take it at once. Thus, a direct inducement was held out to domestic treachery and interested conversions; for a son, nephew, or cousin, by professing himself a Protestant, might dispossess his Roman Catholic father, uncle, or relative.

The following were a few more of the Penal Acts against Roman Catholics. By the 7th William III., "no Protestant in Ireland was allowed to instruct any Papist." By 8th of Anne, "no Papist was allowed to instruct any other Papist." By 7th William III., "no Papist was permitted to be sent out of Ireland to receive instruction." Thus the instruction of Roman Catholics either at home or abroad, was carefully guarded against. So late as the 12th George I., any Catholic clergyman marrying a Protestant and Catholic was to be *hanged*. By 7th George II., "any barrister or attorney marrying a Catholic, to be *disbarred*." By 2nd Anne, "Papist clergymen coming into Ireland and performing religious exercise to be *hanged*." By 8th Anne, fifty pounds reward for all informers against Catholic archbishops and vicars-general. Again, by 7th William III., no Papist was to ride any horse worth more than Five Pounds! And by the 9th George II., Papists residing in Ireland were to make good to Protestants all losses sustained by the privateers of any Catholic king ravaging the coasts of Ireland. But the climax probably of all was the 29th George II., by which barristers and attorneys were obliged to waive their privilege, and betray their clients, if Papists. Can any Englishman now read of these acts, without feeling ashamed of his country?

What then is the remedy for the numerous ills of Ireland? Fortunately, the first grand step has been taken in the way of amelioration, the admission of all classes, without distinction of sect, to a participation in all social and political rights. This was an indispensable preliminary to the final pacification of the country; for it was vain to suppose, that a body so numerous and now so wealthy as the Roman Catholics, would submit quietly to a state of political degradation.

Till Emancipation was granted, there was no hope for Ireland, and no means of governing it but by a small minority; that measure was important, not only because it did away with an odious inequality, and a perpetual source of internal dissension, as well as of disaffection to England, not only because it abolished laws most disgraceful to the British name; but also because for the first time Ireland might hope to be self-governed. So long as Roman Catholics, *i. e.* the great majority of the nation, were excluded from political rights, self-government was evidently impossible, whatever in other respects might be the form of the constitution, whether Ireland possessed a domestic legislature, or whether it did not. Catholic Emancipation, then, was a suitable preliminary to Repeal; and but for the former, the latter would have been comparatively unimportant.

But it is thought by many, probably by most Englishmen, that Ireland has at last got her due, and that she ought to demand nothing more. True it is that by the act of Union modified by the Reform Bill, Ireland sends 28 Peers and 105 Commoners to the Imperial Parliament, while by the Catholic Relief Bill persons of all religious persuasions are admitted into either house. These no doubt are important privileges, but can we say conscientiously that they are enough? Let us remember that the population of Ireland is now fully equal to half that of England and Wales, the one being above 8 millions—the other below 16; while the number of British Peers, exclusive of Scotch, amounts to about 400, and the number of representatives for England and Wales to 500. Were representation in proportion to numbers, it is clear that Ireland ought to have 250 representatives instead of 105, and though we should allow that in this case population is not the only element to be taken into account, yet, whatever other elements we may admit, it is evidently impossible that 105 members merged in 553 returned for Great Britain, can be an adequate representation for the sister island. Were these 105 to sit and deliberate alone, the case would be very different, but as it is, their influence and votes are neutralized by the overwhelming majority of British members. We must also remember that these 105 members have not only to fight the great battle of the constitution, to deliberate on affairs common to the whole empire as well as those affecting Ireland in particular, but they have also to attend to the interests of their several localities; an amount of business for which their number is miserably inadequate, and altogether out of proportion to the full representation of England.

There are but two ways in which this glaring inequality can be remedied. We may increase the number of Irish members in the Impe-

rial Parliament ; or we may restore to Ireland her long lost Legislature, reformed and purified, and modified to suit the present circumstances, according to the lessons of a dearly bought experience. To the first of these expedients, considered as alone sufficient, there are weighty objections. First : The present House of Commons is certainly quite numerous enough, and the addition of as many members as Ireland might fairly demand would make it very unmanageable. Secondly : The Imperial Parliament is already oppressed with the weight of Irish affairs, and the additional members, if they attended to the interests of their constituents, could not fail still more to occupy the house, both in general discussions, and with local concerns. Thirdly : it seems unnecessary and unreasonable to withdraw so many men from their own country and from their local duties, to spend half the year in London, at a great expense, provided the desired object can be obtained by a domestic legislature. Fourthly, this scheme would not in the least obviate one of the crying evils of the present system, the enormous expense and delay attendant on the passing of private bills, when counsel and witnesses must be sent from Dublin to London, and kept there for a length of time. Lastly, this plan would not satisfy the Irish nation, which above all things pants for a separate existence, and some local independence. Nothing then remains but the expedient of a Domestic Legislature ; and to this accordingly we look as the only effectual remedy for the ills of Ireland.

The advantages to be expected from such an institution are numerous and important.

First, " The Imperial Parliament would thus at once be freed from a weary burthen, a perfect mill-stone, which cripples every movement, and enfeebles every step. Why does Parliament now sit for half the year at least, and often to little purpose ? Why are days and nights frequently spent in unprofitable discussion, till members fall asleep on their benches, and the public become tired and indifferent ? Why is night turned into day, summer into winter ? The answer is still the same—Ireland, Ireland, Ireland ! By undertaking to legislate for all the affairs of Ireland, local and general, as well as those of Great Britain, the Imperial Parliament has involved itself in a maze without an issue ; and though it sweat and toil, yet it cannot get through its duty. Thus, experience has shown that it has undertaken a task which it cannot perform ; and therefore the sooner it get rid of a part of the burthen, the better for itself, for Ireland, and for Britain. Let any one look back upon the parliamentary history of this country since the Union, and observe how large a share of the time of both houses has been given



to the affairs of Ireland, and then let him say whether these affairs are not quite enough to employ a separate legislature. The Imperial Parliament is now like an urchin, with too heavy a weight on his back, who, proud of his strength, will still not be assisted ; so he totters along, and after many trips, and a long delay, he arrives worn out at his journey's end.

" Secondly, not only would the Parliament in London be freed from a heavy burden, but the affairs peculiar to Ireland would be much better understood, and probably much better managed, by a local than by a central government, composed for the most part of persons who know little more of Ireland than they do of Transylvania. How can it be supposed that men who are sufficiently taken up with their own affairs, and whose minds are moulded on what they see around them, should have either time, inclination, or patience enough, to judge of the interests, and consult the feelings of a people, whom perhaps they have never visited, not even for a few short weeks? How many members of both Houses have travelled over half the continent, but have never paid one fleeting visit to an island in their immediate vicinity, of more importance to Britain than the empire of all the Indies ! And a man may know England well, and be very ignorant of Ireland : for the English and Irish differ as widely in their character, as the condition of the one country differs from that of the other. The difference of religion alone is an insuperable obstacle to a perfect fusion of the two countries. So long as Ireland continues Roman Catholic, there can never be a complete union between it and Great Britain ; and of this England seems to have been well aware ; for during a long period, all political, nay, almost any social existence, was denied to Roman Catholics, and a small minority, being Protestant, were said to constitute Church and State."\*

That the English members of the Imperial Parliament generally grow impatient when Irish affairs come on, is so notorious as to require but a passing notice. What hope can there be of a fair hearing from persons too indifferent to the subject to pay it a due attention ? Every where Englishmen are noted for their supercilious contempt of other countries, and they seldom take the pains of inquiring into laws and institutions which they judge beforehand immeasurably inferior to their own.

" That the Parliament in London is inadequate to legislate for all the local interests of a country so different in many respects as Ireland is from England, is proved by the many bungling attempts at legislation which have of late years disgraced the Statute-book, wherever Ireland

\* See the Author's Pamphlet, " Repeal without Disunion," 1843.

was concerned. Look for instance at the Irish Poor Law. Poor Laws, it was said, are good, nay necessary in England, particularly the New Poor Law. Let us then apply the same to Ireland: and what has been the consequence? a signal failure, as we all see; a failure arising from the lamentable ignorance of English legislators on matters relative to the sister island: a failure which was one cause of the Repeal agitation of 1843. It was generally seen that a Parliament which could pass such a law was unfit to legislate for the local affairs of Ireland.”\*

“We have thus shown that a domestic legislature in Ireland would both be a great relief to the over-burdened Imperial Parliament, and also in general a great boon to Ireland itself. But there are two circumstances in particular which deeply concern that island, and on which a local legislature would have an immense influence—namely, Absenteeism, and the Tenure of Land.

The prevalence of absenteeism is of very ancient date in Ireland. King Edward the First laid the first Income Tax upon Irish absentees; and by a statute of King Richard the Second, two-thirds of the rents of all absentee landlords were forfeited, and applied to the defence of their lands. This statute was repeatedly acted upon in this and several following reigns; and King Henry the Eighth, by an absentee Act passed in the middle of his reign, actually resumed for the Crown, the Irish possessions of several great absentee English noblemen.

All, I believe, who have since written on the state of Ireland, with one remarkable exception, have agreed in ranking absenteeism among its principal evils. It surely required no great acuteness to perceive that the perpetual absence of a great part of the land proprietors, must, on many accounts, be a very serious inconvenience. First, there is the evil of the rents being spent abroad, and not at home, in London or Paris, rather than in Dublin or the provinces; whereby the country is deprived of a rich home-market, one of the greatest sources of prosperity. Secondly, by the absence of the landlords, the country has been deprived of all those benefits which may be supposed, or which at least ought, to flow from a resident gentry; benefits in the way of agricultural improvements, employment of domestic servants, and of out-door labourers in gardens, pleasure grounds, and works of embellishment; as well as of all that moral improvement, countenance, and protection, which the country people may expect from a proprietor who lives always among them. Instead of this, the peasantry have been handed over to the tender mercies of the agent or the middleman, per-

\* “Repeal without Disunion.”

sons who have no permanent interest in the soil, who are neither proprietors, nor have the feelings of such, and whose only object is to squeeze the last drop out of the orange. These evils, which depend upon absenteeism, are so great and so palpable, that except a single individual, no one seems to deny them. One author indeed, and of no mean reputation, nay, a first-rate political economist, a member of the French Institute, has written to prove that these evils are imaginary, that far from being a draw-back, absenteeism is rather an advantage. Ask the tradesmen of the West-end. Ask Messrs. Howell and James, Swan and Edgar, Hoby, Gunter, whether they derive no benefit from the residence of the aristocracy; whether, in particular, the meeting of Parliament in London or in Dublin be indifferent to them. Ask the farmers and market-gardeners around the metropolis, whether the great and near market of London be of no advantage to them; and if they answer *none*, then may we believe that a rich home-market in Ireland would be of no benefit to that country.

“This, though a real evil, is small as compared with the other evils connected with absenteeism, and in particular the system of land-letting, the crying enormity of Ireland. Of all the causes which affect the condition of the agricultural population, that is, the great majority of most nations, none can be compared in importance with the tenure of Land. Even under a despotic government which respects property, and is free from glaring oppression (such as Austria), a country may be tolerably happy and prosperous, provided the tenure of land be favourable to the peasantry; while under a constitutional monarchy, the people may be poor and miserable, if land be possessed or held in a different manner.

“It may now be considered as established by a wide experience, that nothing is more favourable to the peasantry of any country, than a facility of acquiring landed property. It has been found that wherever the peasantry in general possess land, there foresight, prudence, and economy prevail; and so far from promoting a too rapid rate of increase, it is seen that the possession of land acts as one of the strongest checks to over-population. No doubt, the facility of obtaining a settlement so far tends to encourage early and imprudent marriages, but on the other hand, the habits produced by property, the foresight, the prudence, the fear of falling in the world, which arise from possessing something, the desire of more, which only requires a beginning to become a passion, these do more than counterbalance the opposite causes. And this I conceive to be proved by a wide experience. First, observe the great Kingdom of France, where a vast body of the peasantry is



possessed of land, whose condition has certainly much improved since the Revolution, and where population increases very slowly as compared with Great Britain and many other countries. Next look to Belgium, and in particular to Flanders, where the peasantry have long been possessors of land, and where the high state of cultivation, and the comfortable condition of the labourers, are alike remarkable. Go on then to Norway, of which we have a minute account in the interesting work of Mr. Laing, who spent a considerable time in that country, and who bears ample testimony to the happy state of the agricultural population as connected with the general diffusion of landed property. From Norway we may turn south to those parts of Germany, such as Baden and Wirtemberg, where the peasantry possess land, and enjoy a degree of comfort which is quite striking; and to Switzerland, the country (*par excellence*) of peasant proprietors, no less noted for the neatness of their dwellings and general prosperity, than for their independence of mind and national spirit. Lastly, we may cross the Alps, and compare the peasantry of Tuscany who possess land, with the rural population in other parts of Italy, such as Lombardy and the Papal States, where they do not, and every one must allow the difference to be greatly in favour of the former. These facts, and very many more, go to prove our assertion, that the greatest of all blessings to a country, is the general possession of land by the peasantry.”\*

But it may be thought by some, and indeed it has often been said, that the very country we are now considering tends to refute all this. Is not land very much divided in Ireland; and is not that subdivision universally considered as one main cause of the poverty and misery of the people? Is then land so divided in Ireland? are the peasantry in general possessors of a portion of the soil? Very far from it. There is no country in Europe where landed property is so concentrated. Farms, no doubt, holdings, are amazingly subdivided; but holdings are not property. Can we compare the existence of a cottier-tenant holding his ground on a rack-rent, and liable to be turned out of house and home on non-payment, with an independent proprietor labouring on his own account, and having nothing to pay to any one? How can we expect in the former, that foresight, prudence, and economy, which distinguish the latter? The one is certain of something which therefore he fears to lose, and hopes to improve, because all he gains is his own;

\* The reader who may wish to see an ample body of facts bearing upon this point, will do well to consult the first volume of Alison's *Principles of Population*. See also the Author's "Essay on the Distribution of Wealth," *chap. viii.*, and his "Repeal without Disunion," from which the above passage is taken.

the other has nothing to rely on, and has no hopes of bettering his condition, for a heavy rent bows him down ; so he becomes reckless as those who have little to fear and nothing to hope. Therefore the argument against the possession of land by the peasantry, derived from the supposed example of Ireland, is utterly and entirely fallacious."

Next to the possession of land, the best tenure undoubtedly is that of farms held on leases of considerable duration, and let by the proprietor directly, and not by some middleman, himself but a tenant occupying a precarious position, and interested in extracting the utmost penny from his unfortunate sub-tenant.

"It is impossible to conceive a plan more ingeniously contrived for the oppression of the miserable tenantry, than that of sub-letting through many degrees. When land is let as in England and elsewhere, by the proprietor directly, to those who occupy and cultivate it, whatever is paid as rent becomes the possession of one individual, who has therefore a sole and great interest in the soil ; which is truly and properly his own. Now, as most men are inclined to look with complacency on what belongs exclusively to themselves, a part of the agreeable feeling with which he regards his woods and fields becomes reflected upon the farmers and labourers employed upon them. Hence in the natural course of things, an amicable intercourse springs up between landlord and tenant, and in times of difficulty from the failure of crops, or an unusually low price of agricultural produce, some remission of rent is very frequently accorded. Instances of this are in England of constant occurrence ; but under the sub-letting system of Ireland, nothing similar can take place. So many persons have an interest in the soil as receivers of rent, that no one in fact has a right to consider himself in particular as the proprietor, and therefore no one can have the feeling of exclusive possession which attaches a man not only to the land, but also to those who till and occupy it ; nor does any person consider himself alone responsible for the condition of the peasantry and tenantry who dwell upon the ground. Besides, it by no means follows that a proprietor has it in his power to relieve the cultivators by a diminution of rent in times of difficulty. The individual who most properly is the owner of the soil, that is, the head landlord who lets the estate in the first instance, does not, as the case supposes, receive his revenue from them, but from some middle-man, who sub-lets to another, and he perhaps to a third, and so on, till at last the land comes into the hands of those who really turn it to account. However desirous then the original landlord may be to alleviate the condition of the resident

tenantry, he has it not in his power, for he has no transactions with them, he has nothing to do with them.”\*

To return to the point in hand. What we maintain is, that this wretched system of sub-letting has arisen in great part from absenteeism, and that the institution of a domestic legislature in Ireland would greatly tend to do away with this as well as the other evils of absenteeism; for, in that case, land proprietors would find themselves obliged to reside more in Ireland, in order to keep up their political influence. They would be inclined to do so, from the wish for that political distinction which is the natural object of the ambition of a landed aristocracy, and which many might look for in Ireland, who could not expect to be remarked on the wide arena of Great Britain. A local legislature which would raise the importance of Ireland, give her an independent existence, and open up a new sphere for the natural and praiseworthy ambition of her sons, is then the only effectual remedy for those great evils, absenteeism, and an execrable tenure of land.

That such would be the result, we have also reason to conclude from the experience of times past, during that short but brilliant period when Ireland possessed an independent parliament. An historian of that period observes, “The Irish nation was rapidly advancing to eminence and prosperity, her commerce improving, her debt light, the taxes inconsiderable, emigration had ceased, and population was augmenting: nearly two hundred nobles, and nearly all the commoners, resided on their demesnes, and expended their rents amidst those who paid them.” “The constant residence of the land proprietors was an incalculable benefit; and their influence in mitigating the avarice of the clergy and the unrelenting tyranny of the tithing system, was most grateful to the people.”†

2. If we have now reason to conclude that a domestic legislature would be an inestimable boon to Ireland, and would ultimately raise the condition of the great mass of the people, then it could not fail to benefit indirectly the people of Great Britain. Of all the ills that afflict

\* “The Marquis of Lansdowne, the Duke of Devonshire, and other great English Lords who have vast estates in Ireland, are in this condition. Nominally they are proprietors of the soil, though in reality but a small part of what is paid as rent, comes into their pockets. The troubled state of Ireland after the great confiscations, rendered the English who obtained lands in that country, glad to let them on very long leases and at a very low rent, to any one who would take the trouble of managing the property. These again have sublet them, and so on.”—See Ramsay’s “*Essay on the Distribution of Wealth*,” *chap. viii.*

† See Sir Jonah Barrington’s “*Historic Records, and secret Memoirs of the Legislative Union*,” *chap. xx.*



the latter, none is more apparent than the injury which they suffer from the immense influx of Irish labourers. It is calculated that in the twenty years succeeding the Union, no less than one million of Irish emigrated to England and Scotland.\* This number of men, accustomed to low wages and an inferior mode of living, could not fail materially to interfere with the labouring population of Great Britain.

This is the scourge, the punishment inflicted on the latter country for her long misgovernment of Ireland. *Quicquid delirant Reges, plectuntur Achivi*. And so it has proved in this case. Sooner or later injustice will be punished, even in this life, particularly the injustice of nations, who live long enough to pay the penalty of their crimes. Out of the very misery of Ireland has sprung a numerous population, who can only be supported by snatching the bread from the English labourer or artizan. This punishment was necessary to make England *feel* her injustice; but now that she has felt it, will she not try and amend, if not out of regard to Ireland, at least for her own sake? Nothing can stop this stream of hungry men but an improvement at home; and we have seen that this can best be effected by a domestic Parliament.

III. 1. Having seen reason to conclude that the institution of a domestic legislature in Ireland would be agreeable to sound general principles of government, and a great relief to the over-burthened Imperial Parliament, that it would be conducive to the best interests of Ireland, and also promote indirectly the welfare of the population of Great Britain, it remains to be seen whether any practical plan can be devised to carry out this idea, and yet maintain the integrity of the empire.

The plans that can be proposed on this subject may be reduced ultimately to two. The first is in its nature one and absolute; the second admits of modifications to be afterwards explained.

According to the first and extreme plan, Great Britain and Ireland should constitute two *distinct kingdoms*, each having its own Parliament, Independent and Supreme, possessing the exclusive right to make laws for its own people in all concerns, *external* as well as *internal*; but each acknowledging one and the same King. This system is not the mere creature of fancy, but was actually adopted in 1782. The whole history of that eventful period is a proof of this, and in particular the famous Declaration of Independence moved by Grattan, on the 16th of April, 1782, and carried unanimously. His proposed address to the King ran thus, "We shall beg leave with all duty and submission to lay before his Majesty the cause of all our discontents and jealousies;

\* See Alison's "Principles of Population," vol. ii. chap. 12.

to assure his Majesty that his subjects of Ireland are a free people; that the Crown of Ireland is an *Imperial Crown*, inseparably connected with the Crown of Great Britain, on which connexion the interests and happiness of both nations essentially depend; but that the kingdom of Ireland is a *distinct kingdom*, with a Parliament of her own, the sole legislature thereof; that there is no body of men competent to make laws to bind the nation, but the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland; nor any Parliament which hath any authority, or power of any sort whatever in this country, save only the Parliament of Ireland; to assure his Majesty that we humbly conceive that in this right, the very essence of one likely exists; a right which we on the part of all the people of Ireland do claim as their birth-right, and which we cannot yield but with our lives."

This address, as we have said, was carried unanimously, and was followed up on the twenty-ninth of July, by a motion of Mr. Flood, for leave to bring in a Bill "to affirm the sole exclusive right of the Irish Parliament to make laws affecting this country, in all concerns *external* and *internal* whatsoever." This motion indeed was not carried, but simply because Grattan moved as an amendment, "that leave be refused to bring in the (Mr. Flood's) Bill, because the sole and exclusive right to legislate for Ireland in all cases whatsoever, internally and externally, had been asserted by the Parliament of Ireland, and had been fully, finally, and irrevocably acknowledged by the British Parliament;" which motion was agreed to by the House.

In the next Session of the British Parliament, the famous Renunciation Act was passed (23d George III.), whereby it is declared "that the said right claimed by the people of Ireland, to be bound only by laws enacted by his Majesty and the Parliament of that kingdom, in *all* cases whatever, and to have all actions and suits at law or in equity which may be instituted in that kingdom, decided in his Majesty's courts therein, finally and without appeal from thence, shall be, and it is hereby declared to be, established and ascertained for ever, and shall at no time hereafter be questioned or questionable." When we know what the system adopted in 1782 really was, we can be at no loss to account for the ultimate failure of a revolution, certainly one of the most glorious in the history of the world. Had that revolution like so many others been disgraced by crime, we should not so much deplore its termination; but when we consider its pure, bloodless, and truly patriotic character, we cannot but deeply feel its disgraceful and lamentable end. How we *do* deplore that such talents and such virtue should all have been thrown away! that the dazzling eloquence and the

patriotism of Grattan, the wisdom of Flood, the nobility of Charlemont, and the fire of Curran, should at last have yielded to the violence of Fitzgibbon, and the unprincipled wiles of Castlereagh ! But while we weep over this shameful catastrophe, let us profit at least by sad experience—let us not again attempt a system self-condemned and impracticable from the beginning, which not even the greatest talents nor the greatest virtue could have rendered possible. No doubt, these were secondary causes of the ultimate failure of the Revolution of 1782, such as the exclusion of the Roman Catholics from the Irish Parliament, the unhappy Rebellion, the corrupt state of the Irish House of Commons, three-fourths of which it was calculated were returned by undue influence, and above all, the unscrupulous arts, and all the wealth of England employed in cajoling or purchasing both Peers and Commons ; but the fundamental cause was the adoption from the beginning of a false system—a system which never could work, for it was founded on an absurd principle.

To assert the perfect independence and supremacy of two Parliaments in one empire, is a contradiction in terms, and can mean nothing ; for supremacy excludes equality ; and if the two be equal, neither is supreme. The supremacy of both may be stated in words, and even inserted in a law, but it cannot exist in fact.

The difficulties which flow from this one absurd principle, are numberless and insoluble.

Surely it cannot be supposed that those two powers who both pretend to supremacy, shall agree on every occasion ; and if they differ, *who is to decide between them ?* We repeat the question, who is to decide between them ? No power clearly has a right so to do, for in that case there would be a third power superior to both, and both would be its subordinates, and consequently neither would be supreme. In this dilemma one or other must yield ; and whichever yields, not from conviction but from weakness, abdicates its supremacy. If neither will yield peaceably, then war is inevitable ; and whichever is conquered, of course ceases to be sovereign. Thus in one way or the other, the weaker must go to the wall, and its nominal as well as its real supremacy must cease.

When two powers nominally of equal authority are placed side by side, and in such circumstances that one must hamper the other, it is contrary to the fundamental principles of human nature to suppose that the stronger will ever cease to encroach upon the weaker, until it have absorbed or subdued it. Were the experiment of 1782 to be repeated we may rest assured that sooner or later the result would be



the same. Great Britain might grant the trial in a moment of weakness, as on the former occasion ; but it would only be to gain time ; and on the first favourable opportunity she would revoke what she had unwillingly conceded. So long as human nature continues unchanged, this would infallibly happen.

Consider now the position of the King in the case of a collision between the two Parliaments. He is monarch of both kingdoms, and consequently is bound to protect both equally ; but as he cannot have two wills, he must side with one or the other. Suppose the dispute comes to blows, how dreadful must be his position ! If he take part with Great Britain, as is most probable, he must declare war against the Irish, and cease in fact to be their king ; while they, in order to defend themselves and carry on the government, must choose another head, and so throw off their allegiance to the Sovereign. In truth, under such a system, nothing but a total separation could prevent Ireland from being absorbed by Great Britain ; and even a total separation could be but temporary ; and Ireland would become, as it was for many centuries, a scene of perpetual struggle and indecisive conflict. Let me entreat all Irishmen, and especially all Repealers, to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the history of 1782, and the years down to the Union. Let me implore them to gain wisdom by experience, and not again to repeat a blunder which no talents and no virtue could remedy. True it is, that we are now in some respects placed in more favourable circumstances than in 1782, for the Roman Catholics are now emancipated, and a grand source of dissension is thus dried up ; but, on the other hand, England is now strong, and then she was weak, and never without a bloody struggle would she agree to unqualified Repeal. And even if she did at last give in, she would act, as before, deceitfully ; she might promise, as then, that the independence of Ireland should be “established and ascertained for ever, and should at no time hereafter be questioned or questionable ;”<sup>\*</sup> but her promises would be as pie-crusts, made only to be broken.

In politics, as in chess, one false move may be fatal. A strong, bold, but ill-taught fencer or boxer, may ward off for a time the thrusts or blows of his more scientific adversary ; but he cannot ultimately make up for the want of correct principle. A false principle contains within it, the seeds of inevitable ruin.

That the system of 1782 was impracticable, is shown evidently from the history. Five years after, an attempt was made to settle the com-

<sup>\*</sup> Renunciation Act, before quoted.

mercial relations between Great Britain and Ireland by treaty ; but not all the talents of Pitt could bring it to a conclusion. Again in 1789, came on the Regency question ; and here a direct collision took place between the two Parliaments. The British Parliament, under the direction of Pitt, gave the Regency to the Prince of Wales, but with a restricted prerogative, while the Irish Parliament endowed him with all the kingly powers. Fortunately no embarrassment resulted from this collision, because the King happened to recover immediately, otherwise the difficulty would have been serious.

This affair, however, could not fail to open people's eyes ; for if both Parliaments could choose their Regent, they might choose different persons ; and thus the two kingdoms would be totally separated. This reflection occurred to the English Ministry, and it urged them the more to use every art to upset the existing system, to spare no means, whether fair or foul, to employ alternately, force, fraud, and corruption ; to squander titles, and spend millions of money ; but, at all events, to bring about an Union.

2.—We come now to consider the other grand general plan, that of a Parliament in one country, in this case in Ireland, for local affairs only, limited to a certain sphere, but enjoying considerable freedom of action within that sphere ; and yet subordinate to the central and Imperial Legislature.

This system, it is evident, is not liable to the same fundamental objection as the other ; for it does not pretend to set up side by side two sovereign and independent Parliaments, with equal duties and powers ; but it supposes that one alone is supreme, the other subordinate. Therefore there is no *primâ facie* absurdity in this scheme, no palpable contradiction, no evident source of disturbance. It is only one application of a principle adopted under every government, the principle of local powers, in the country, or in towns, subordinate to the central government, but acting with more or less freedom and independence within their own sphere. The system, moreover, of a subordinate Parliament, has been tried in many instances, and with success ; whereas the other, as far as we know, never was adopted anywhere but in Ireland, where it failed.

This system admits of two modifications.

The first is that in which the country possessing the local Parliament is not also represented in the Imperial Legislature : the second, where it is.

The first modification has been adopted by Great Britain in the

government of such of her colonies as possess representative assemblies for managing their own affairs. Before the American States separated from the mother country, they were thus governed ; and so are Jamaica, Canada, and many other British colonies, at the present day. The colony, on the one hand, takes no part in the Imperial government, but is satisfied with its domestic legislature ; while the mother country, on the other, in general interferes little with the local assembly. But it retains the right of interfering, and occasionally exercises that right ; as in two remarkable instances within these few years—the suspension of the constitution of Jamaica, and the re-modelling of that of Canada. The American colonies, so long as they remained such, did not object to this sovereign power in the mother country, nor even to the imposition of taxes at the out-ports by the British Parliament ; but what they did repudiate, was internal taxation by any but their own representatives.

Similar to this, is the relation subsisting between Sweden and Norway. Norway enjoys its own Parliament, or *Storting*, which consists of a single Chamber democratically constituted, that meets every third year only, for affairs exclusively Norwegian ; nor does Norway send any representatives to the Swedish Diet or States-general (*Stoenderne*) : and consequently it has no part in the general Government of the United Kingdom.

This system is well adapted for the mutual relations of a mother country and her colonies, where the one party is far stronger than the other ; where the former takes upon herself the charge and sole expense of the common defence, and therefore may well claim the right of sovereign legislation, and also where the colony is so remote as to render the sending of representatives to the parent state, extremely inconvenient. These reasons do not exist for the maintenance of the present system in the united kingdom of Sweden and Norway ; and therefore we can hardly look upon it as a permanent arrangement. Indeed, from its nature it is but a temporary expedient, admirably adapted to certain circumstances, but quite unfit for others. A new colony, distant and defenceless, may well submit to this dependent condition for the sake of the protection and the trade of the old country ; but when that colony shall grow in years, and come to feel its strength, it will hardly consent to be for ever subordinate. The attempt at internal taxation by Great Britain was the exciting cause of the American Revolution ; but the predisposing and principal cause was the yearning for political independence of a country no longer in infancy.

That such a system should now be applied to Ireland, scarcely any



one, I think, would maintain. If it ever were adapted to that country, the period is now long past. Ireland now comprises fully eight millions of people, more than half the population of England; she is close at hand; and she contributes along with Great Britain to the common defence of the empire, by men and by money.

The past glories of Britain and her present pre-eminence among the nations are certainly in great measure owing to the Irish, who man her fleets and fill the ranks of her army. Compared with Ireland, all the peninsula of India is as nothing in the estimate of British power. It is therefore absurd to suppose that a country such as this, either could or should be content to act merely a subordinate part; to manage her own local affairs, and leave Imperial legislation to Great Britain. This in fact would be to retrograde sixty years, to go back to the period before 1782, during which England assumed the right to legislate for Ireland. By Poyning's Law, passed under Henry VII., every vestige of independence in the Irish Parliament was destroyed; for by this statute, before any bill could be discussed, it was first to be submitted to the Lord Lieutenant and his Privy Council for their consideration, who might at their pleasure refer or transmit it to England; and if transmitted to England, the British Attorney-General and Privy Council might either suppress altogether, or model it at their own will, and then return it to Ireland, with permission to the Irish Parliament to pass it into a law, but without alteration. This was followed up long after by an Act (6th George I.) whereby Great Britain assumed a positive right to legislate for Ireland without the co-operation of the Irish Parliament. By the first Act, England provided that Ireland should make no law without her previous consent; by the second, she declared that the Acts of the British Parliament should be binding on Ireland, whether the latter would or not. Is it to times like these, and to acts like these, that we should now return? But give Ireland a domestic Parliament, and at the same time deprive her of imperial representation, and the good old times are come again.

The only modification which now remains to be considered, is that which is commonly known by the name of the **FEDERAL SYSTEM**—a system which has been adopted by many nations, both in ancient and modern times, with very great success. In this arrangement, two or more distinct states choose one common government for the management of general interests, while in local affairs each state remains independent. This independence, however, can never be quite absolute, for whenever there be a doubt as to the proper sphere of the central

and the local authority, or whenever there be a dispute between the different states of the Union, the central power must decide, and is therefore really sovereign. "Thus each of the confederates gives up a portion of its independence for the more secure enjoyment of the rest, just as those who first formed and continue to live in society, abandon some of their natural liberty the better to preserve the remainder."\*

The first circumstance that must strike us with respect to this system is, that it appears to unite in an admirable manner the central with the local power; upon which Union, as we have already observed, good government very much depends. It combines the advantages of a great with those of a small nation; the power, security and foreign influence of the one, with the local spirit, the home inspection, the paternal care of the other; the importance of an empire with the happiness of a canton. It is equally suited to a large and to a little country, to the great American Union, and to the confined districts of Holland and Switzerland; and therefore we cannot but think that this system will spread, and form an important feature in the political history of future times.

The experience of past times is decidedly in favour of the system. Not to dwell on the Federal unions of antiquity, such as the old Etrurian Confederacy, which once extended from the Alps to the Tiber, the Ætolian and Achæan leagues, the republic of the Bœotians, and that of the Lycians, so much praised by Montesquieu;† the modern examples of the republics of Holland, Switzerland, and North America, are striking and satisfactory.

"The first requisite for the success of such a scheme, evidently is, that the political institutions of the States forming an union, be on the whole similar, for republics and monarchies could hardly live together in peace. In all the above instances the confederates were republics." "In the ancient constitution of Germany, however, an amalgamation was attempted, for the confederate powers were some of them free towns, others principalities, but much cannot be said for the success of the experiment. That country was never so united as really to form but one nation, like its neighbours the Dutch and Swiss; and previous to the sixteenth century, when the House of Austria became very powerful, it was subject to all the disorders of the feudal governments. Even during each of the last three centuries, Germany has had intestine wars, and on a great scale; as that of Charles V. against the Protestants, the thirty years' war, and the campaigns of Frederick the Great."‡

\* Ramsay's "Political Discourses;" Dis. V. p. 355.

† *Esprit des Lois*, l. ix. ch. 3. ‡ "Ramsay's Political Discourses;" Dis. V.

At present, Germany is a confederation of States, each with its own King or Royal Duke, and this promises better than the former arrangement, as is proved in particular by the Zollverein or Customs League, which is a symptom as well as cause of union.

Wherever there is a number of kingly heads, however, there must be a danger of disunion, such as does not exist where the kingly power is one and indivisible. Even among united republics, jealousies are apt to arise, and there is danger of separation from want of a permanent and strong executive. These evils are not to be feared where the confederate States acknowledge a king and but one king; and therefore, of all political conditions, none seems so favourable to the Federal system. If this system has succeeded well among separate republics, we have therefore every reason to conclude that it would answer even far better in an united kingdom such as Great Britain and Ireland, where there would be neither the jealousies of rival republics or rival kings, nor the danger arising from the want of a permanent and strong executive. Here every thing seems to favour the application of the system; and to it accordingly we look not only as the grand remedy for the present deep-seated ills, and as a security for the future good government of Ireland, but also as an immense improvement in the general administration of the empire.

Agreeably to this plan, Ireland would possess a Parliament for its own internal affairs, and at the same time continue to send representatives to the Imperial Parliament in London.

The chief difficulty attendant on the Federal system, consists in accurately defining the limits of the subordinate or local, and the Imperial or Central Legislation. This Essay would be very deficient if it did not trace the outline of these limits; and this accordingly we shall now endeavour to do, with all due deference to the collective wisdom of the Parliament which may be called on to decide the matter.

QUESTIONS APPERTAINING TO THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, WHETHER TO THE CROWN ALONE, OR TO THE KING, LORDS, AND COMMONS IN IMPERIAL PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED.

1. All questions relative to the succession to the Crown, Regency, Civil List, and Royal Family.

2. The question of Peace or War, and consequently the raising of troops by sea and land, and the paying of them; in short, all things necessary for war.

3. The making of Treaties with Foreign Powers.

4. All Laws relative to the management of the Colonies.



5. All Laws relative to Customs and Duties levied at sea-ports. This power is essential to the unity and harmony of the empire; for there could be neither, if an Irish Parliament imposed duties on goods imported from Great Britain, *or vice versâ*.

6. The Post Office and Postage.

7. The Mint and the Standard of the Currency: but paper money and the banking system may be left to the Local government; for these last may vary in different parts of the empire without inconvenience, as they actually do in Great Britain, where the Scotch system differs from the English.

8. The power of raising loans for any of the above purposes.

9. The power of raising a general Income Tax in case of war. This is a necessary consequence of the power of declaring war, raising troops, &c.

#### QUESTIONS APPERTAINING TO THE LOCAL OR IRISH PARLIAMENT.

1. The Church. As the Church Establishment and Church regulations in Scotland differ from those of England, so might they in Ireland.

2. Education.

3. The Poor and Poor Laws.

4. The regulation of Prisons, Asylums, Factories, &c., and in short all great establishments where the public welfare is concerned.

5. Internal Taxation, such as Excise, and Assessed Taxes, commonly so called; in short, all Taxes except Customs, Postage, and a general war Income Tax. Of course the Irish Parliament would be competent to vote a Local Income Tax if it thought fit.

6. Paper Money and the Banking system.

7. The Judicial Establishment, and Civil and Criminal Law in general, which might vary in Ireland as they do in Scotland, if the Irish thought proper.

8. All private Bills.

With respect to the Judicial power, no change is proposed. The Irish House of Lords should be only a Legislative body, and the Imperial House of Lords should continue to be the one supreme and final Court of Appeal for the United Kingdom. Even in America, where the separate States have so much independence, there is one Federal Court of Justice for the whole union, and this has been found by experience to be an admirable institution.

We come now to a very important, and probably the most difficult part of the scheme, the Composition and Powers of the Executive Go-

vernment. It is not a little singular, that while Ireland was raising the standard of Repeal, and calling loudly for local independence, a measure should have been proposed in the Imperial Parliament, of a directly opposite nature, tending to increase, instead of diminishing, the prevailing Centralization. To bring forward a motion for the abolition of the Lord Lieutenancy, the only remaining vestige of independence and separate existence now left to the Irish nation, was surely a strange answer to the popular cry. Very different is the plan which we propose. Instead of diminishing the powers and the dignity of the Lord Lieutenant, we would greatly increase both: we would make him really what he is now but nominally, a Viceroy. He should continue to be named by the Crown and be revocable at pleasure; but so long as he remained Viceroy, he should enjoy the kingly prerogative. He would still be a delegate with a precarious authority; but while it lasted, that authority should be great. His position would be exactly similar to that of the Governor of Canada, who is responsible to the Imperial Government, but not to the Canadians. As regards the Crown, he would be a subject and delegate; but as respects the Irish, a King.

From this it necessarily follows that the Lord Lieutenant should name his own ministry, as does the Governor of Canada. The Irish Secretary would be the Prime Minister of the Lord Lieutenant and of Ireland.

By this arrangement one principal difficulty would be removed or lessened, viz.: the difficulty arising from the case in which the same ministry might not be acceptable to the Imperial and to the Irish Parliament, and might not command majorities in both. The difficulty would be reduced to one point, the choice of a Lord Lieutenant; and surely it is not too much to say, that an Imperial Ministry, whether Whig or Tory, could always find a person for that high office, acceptable to the Irish people, without being hostile to themselves. That choice once made, the Lord Lieutenant would be left to name his own administration, and would occupy a position in which he would not be called upon at all times to consult and act along with the Imperial Ministry, as the Irish Secretary is at present. His sphere of action would be different from that of the Central Government, and to a certain degree independent of it; and therefore no Whig or Tory should object to fill the office, though named by a ministry of different political principles. Even under the old system, that good Whig, Earl Fitzwilliam, did not refuse the Lieutenancy from the hands of the Tory Pitt. As well might it be said that a Whig or Tory Ministry in London might find it impossible to choose a Governor acceptable to the Canadians, as that

a Whig or Tory Ministry could not select a Lord Lieutenant acceptable to the Irish.

The Irish Ministry, being named by the Lord Lieutenant, would of course be answerable to him, and to the Irish Parliament, and revocable by him at pleasure. Both Houses would be opened and closed, *as formerly*, by a speech from the Lord Lieutenant, as Viceroy, and he would have the privilege of giving or refusing assent to Acts of the Irish Parliament in the name of the Queen. No doubt, on any emergency, he might consult the Imperial Ministry, but he would not be bound to do so: he would be left to his own discretion, like the Governor of Canada, who may divest himself of responsibility on any question, by reserving it for the consideration of the Crown. Should the Imperial Ministry desire him to give or refuse assent to a bill, he must of course obey, or resign.

By the present Constitution of Canada, a Bill which has passed both Houses, and received the Governor's assent, may be disallowed any time within two years by the Queen, by Order in Council. Though a case might never occur for the exercise of such a prerogative, yet it ought to be respected; and therefore we propose, that during one month after the Viceroy's assent to a Bill which has passed through both Houses shall have been signified to the Imperial Ministry, it shall be lawful for Her Majesty to declare her disallowance of the same.

With respect to Bills passed by both Houses, and reserved for the Royal consideration, the Constitution of Canada declares that no Bill so reserved "shall have any power or authority, unless Her Majesty's assent thereto shall have been signified within the space of two years from the day on which such Bill shall have been presented for Her Majesty's assent to the Governor."<sup>\*</sup> A similar article might be inserted into the Irish Constitution, with this difference, that the period should be reduced to three months.

We have already said that the unity, permanence, and strength of the Crown of the United Kingdom are highly favourable to the Federal system. For the Central Government is apt to be its weak point. "As the family had an existence before the state, so the state before the union; and as the love of family is stronger than that of state, so is this than love of the confederacy. Some palpable advantage, no doubt, first led to the association, but all the old habits and affections of the people were connected with the different localities. Reason may approve of the union,

<sup>\*</sup> See "An Act to re-unite the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, and for the Government of Canada." An. 3. and 4. Vic., cap. xxxv.



but passion will always be in favour of the state. Hence, the local power will generally tend to encroach upon the central.”\* In Switzerland, the grand defects are the weakness of the Diet, and the want of a Federal Executive. In the Swiss Diet, votes are given not by head, but by Cantons; and on all important questions, the members do not consider themselves competent to decide, without consulting those Cantons—a practice which leads to interminable delays. This was precisely the form of government which prevailed in North America during the War of Independence, and for six years afterwards, till at last it fell to pieces, and died of absolute weakness. Then was formed the present Constitution, which greatly increased the power of the Central Government, chiefly by allowing members of Congress to vote individually, and without consulting their States, and to decide by a simple majority.†

Again, in Switzerland there is scarcely any permanent Federal Executive. The Diet during its sittings is Legislative and Executive in one, but during the recess there is nothing to represent the latter but a Committee of the Diet called the *Vorort*, which has scarcely any power, for there is no Federal administration, and the decrees of the Diet are left to be enforced by the local authorities. “In this respect the American Union must be considered as an immense improvement, for there the Federal government has its own administration, its own court of justice, and its own army.”

It is not necessary here to enter into much detail as to the composition, duration, and mode of electing the Parliament, whose powers we have endeavoured to define; but a few words on these points seem to be indispensable.

In the first place, then, the Irish House of Lords should be restored in all its integrity as a Legislative body, but it should have no Judicial power.

Secondly, the Irish House of Commons should consist, as formerly, of three hundred members.

Thirdly, the Irish House of Commons cannot be restored exactly as it was before, but must be reconstructed; for, to use the words of Mr. O’Connell, “the mere Repeal of the Union would revive the Irish Parliament, without the benefit of the Reform schedules. It would give

\* Ramsay’s “Political Discourses;” Dis. V.

† In one case, the House of Representatives still votes by States, which is, when it has to choose the President, a case of rare occurrence; for it happens only when there is not a sufficient majority among the delegates appointed for the express purpose.

two members to the ruined abbey of Tulske, two members to the round tower of Kilcullen, two members to the sands of Bannock, and two members to the church-yard wall of Clonmines. This would never do.”\* Into the particulars of this Reform we do not think it necessary to enter, nor do we pretend to be so well acquainted with the different localities of Ireland, as to determine the exact number of members to be returned by each. And it is the less necessary to do so here, as Mr. O’Connell’s plan on this subject is already before the public, and few so well know Ireland as that gentleman. Sufficient to observe that he proposes to give 173 members to the counties, and to the cities and towns 127, of which four to Belfast, and four to Limerick, and two to the Dublin University. Out of the 173 county members he allows 50 to the province of Ulster, a number which shows that he is inclined to do full justice to his Protestant fellow-countrymen.

Fourthly, with respect to the Franchise, we need say only that we think it might safely be more extended than that required for choosing Imperial Representatives.

Fifthly, as regards the duration of the House of Commons, we think that the limits ought to be three and five years; that the period should not be shorter than the one nor longer than the other.

Lastly, the Parliament may be called together, opened, and prorogued by the Lord Lieutenant; but it should be dissolved only by a message from the Crown, communicated through the Viceroy.

Thus far with respect to the Local Government. As to Imperial connexion, little remains to be said. Though 28 Peers and 105 Commons are certainly a very inadequate representation for Ireland at present, when local as well as general affairs are discussed in the Imperial Parliament, yet, in consideration of its domestic Legislature, we think that Ireland should be content with the actual number. Were there even a doubt upon the subject, for the sake of conciliation we would not press the matter. We would not innovate rashly; on the contrary, we would change no more than is absolutely necessary to carry out our principle. We therefore propose no increase to the number of Irish members in the Imperial Parliament.

A question here occurs, if Ireland obtain a Parliament for its own affairs, ought Irish members of the Imperial Parliament to vote on affairs exclusively British? Certainly not. What British affairs may be, has been already defined in treating of affairs peculiar to Ireland,

\* See Mr. O’Connell’s Letter to the Loyal and National Repeal Association, dated Darrynane Abbey, Oct. 2, 1844.

for the same definition applies to both. Whenever, then, *local interests*, as thus ascertained, shall be discussed, the Irish members will leave the House, and the Imperial will instantly become a British Parliament.

IV. We shall conclude this Essay, by a notice of some objections that may be made either to Repeal in general, or to the plan here proposed in particular.

It may be asked, "Did not Ireland once possess a Parliament? And from the experience of its proceedings are we authorized in supposing that the revival of such an institution would be advantageous to the empire at large, or even to Ireland itself? or has it been found that Scotland has fared the worse since she gave up her local Parliament; and if Scotland thrive without her own legislature, why may not Ireland? The Scotch are a shrewd people, and sufficiently attentive to their interests; and have we ever heard them demand a Repeal of the Union?"

"True it is that Ireland did possess a Parliament; but what sort of a body was it? Was it a fair representation of the whole people, without distinction of sect or party? Far, very far otherwise. From the time of Charles II., it was composed exclusively of Protestants; that is, it represented a small minority only of the nation, a minority at variance with the great majority, and which held and wished to maintain the ascendancy. Having itself to depend on a small minority only, and fearing the power of the mass, composed of Roman Catholics, it naturally courted a support without, the support of Great Britain. Thus the Irish Parliament became the mere tool of the English Ministry, a ready instrument for keeping Roman Catholics in subjection."\*

Besides, even of the Protestants, the Irish Parliament represented but a small portion. In 1782-3, an enquiry was made into the state of the representation, with a view to a Reform of the Commons' House of Parliament. The result of the enquiry was as follows:—"The Earl of Ely nominated nine members of the House of Commons; the Earl of Shannon nominated seven; and above twenty other members of the House of Lords nominated and elected members for the House of Commons. Many individuals openly sold their patronage for money to the best bidder; others returned members at the nomination of the Viceroy or his Secretary; and it appeared that the number of representatives elected freely by the people, upon constitutional principles, did not compose one-fourth of the Irish Commons."† Between such a body as

\* "Repeal without Disunion."

† Sir Jonah Barrington's *Historic Records of the Legislative Union*, chap. xvii.



this, and one composed of the representatives of the whole community, without distinction of sect, and fairly elected, there is no analogy; nor can any argument be drawn from the conduct of such an assembly, against the institution of another, founded on opposite principles. But bad as was the composition of the old Irish House of Commons, it still had bright moments, even previous to 1782, when, roused by the Volunteers, and by the voice of Grattan, it asserted its independence, tore asunder the fetters of party and the trammels of sect, and showed itself a dignified and truly national assembly.

Moreover, before 1782, the Irish Parliament, by the two laws above mentioned, was slavishly dependent on the British Privy Council and Parliament; and yet Ireland was not represented in the latter; an arrangement essentially different from that here proposed. Subsequently to 1782, indeed, the Irish Parliament was nominally independent; and though we have endeavoured to show that a system of two Supreme Independent Parliaments in one empire is absurd, and impossible for any length of time, as it soon proved in Ireland, yet it cannot be denied that so long as the Irish Parliament acted with spirit, urged on by the patriotic Volunteers, so long the country enjoyed a prosperity previously unknown. The emancipation of trade, which was the first grand act of 1782, would alone account for much of this. Let us listen to a contemporary historian of that period. "From that day (the day of Irish independence) Ireland rose in wealth, in trade, and in manufactures, agriculture, and every branch of industry that could enhance her value, or render a people rich and prosperous. She had acquired her seat among the nations of the world—she had asserted her independence against the insolence of Portugal—she had suggested an Irish navy to protect her shores—she had declared a perpetual league of mutual amity and aid with Great Britain. The court of her Viceroy appeared as splendid as her Monarch's. Her nobles resided and expended their great fortunes amongst the Irish people—the Commons all resided on their demesnes, supported and fostered a laborious and tranquil tenantry. The peace of the country was perfect—no standing army—no militia—no police were wanting for its preservation; the activity of the Volunteers had suppressed crime in every district; religious prejudices were gradually diminishing; every means of amelioration were in contemplation or in progress."\*

2. With regard to the case of Scotland, which it is attempted to assimilate with that of Ireland, we must remember that there is some

\* Historic Records of the Legislative Union, chap. xxi.

difference between a country which at the time of union contained but one million of people, and even now contains but two and a half, and another which comprises upwards of eight millions of souls. It must also be borne in mind that the characters of the Scotch and English are much more similar than those of the Irish and English, and hence their wants and feelings more alike; and what is very important, that the Scotch and English agree, or nearly agree in religion, while the English and Irish differ. This circumstance alone renders the perfect fusion of the two former possible, that of the latter impossible.

But even between Scotland and England the fusion is far from complete. Though Scotland consented to give up her national Legislature, yet she retained all her other local institutions; her body of civil and criminal law, her courts, her jury, and the whole system of the administration of justice, different from those of England, her own ecclesiastical establishment, and her mode of paying the clergy, utterly different from that prevalent in England; her own system of relieving the poor, and her plan of parochial education. All these did Scotland retain; and therefore, when she parted with her legislature, she did not merge her existence in that of England, but maintained an independent position. Not to mention that the representation of Scotland in the Imperial Parliament is more ample than that of Ireland; 45 members before the Reform Bill, and 53 after, bearing a larger proportion to the population of Scotland than 100 or 105 to that of Ireland.

But is it true that Scotland derived such benefit as many suppose from the Legislative Union with England—in other words, from the loss of her domestic Legislature? Very erroneous opinions, we conceive, are maintained upon this point. That Scotland as well as England derived great benefit from the union of the Crowns there can be no doubt; but that the former gained by being deprived of her local Parliament, may well be questioned. Certain it is, that seven years after the Legislative Union, a petition to the British Parliament was presented against it; and a resolution to that effect was nearly passed, a small majority only voting in favour of the Union. The great start in prosperity made by Scotland did not begin till 70 or 80 years after the Union, and therefore cannot reasonably be attributed to that event. During the first 50 years, two rebellions broke out, which might have been prevented by a domestic Parliament. Nay more, we affirm that the national character of the Scotch was decidedly injured during the last century, from the want of a native field for ambition. Very many, of an aspiring nature, finding no career open at home, resorted to the English Metropolis, and there became notorious as place-hunters,

and hangers-on of the Ministry ; till Scotsman and jobber became almost synonymous. Was ever free country more destitute of public spirit than Scotland during the last century ? The only national movements were the two rebellions ; for constitutional struggles there were none.

Even down to our own days, Scotland was an inert body, with scarcely a breath of life except in the way of trade ; a vast and rotten borough where all power and patronage were vested in a single family, because that family was leagued with the Tories who swayed the English realm. Never, perhaps, was a country, pretending to be free, reduced to greater degradation. The list of Peers to be elected was regularly sent down by the British ministry, and as regularly adopted without any alteration ; the Commons were chosen by a handful of landed proprietors ; and Town Councils were self-elected. There was not the shadow of popular suffrage in the whole kingdom. The consequence was, that in 1826 Scotland was nearly deprived of her long cherished Banking system, for the sake of *uniformity* with England forsooth, and but for the powerful pen of Walter Scott, under the name of Malachi Malagrowther, she probably would have been so. The dreadful and wide spread destitution in the great cities and highlands of Scotland, as laid bare by the Scotch Poor-Law Commission, a destitution unexampled in England, and as is stated, even on the continent of Europe, proves surely a sad neglect, a want of local superintendence. But the strongest case of all to prove the evil which Scotland has experienced from the absence of a domestic legislature, is before our eyes. Can any one believe that the unfortunate schism which has rent the Church of Scotland in twain, separated friends, and severed even the ties of blood, could have taken place had Scotland possessed a Local Parliament, a Parliament interested in the matter and understanding the case ; one which would have legislated *in time*, and not as the Imperial Parliament, *after* the event ? In vain was petition after petition sent up from Scotland to beg, to implore, that government would interfere to avert the impending danger. At last indeed, Parliament, or rather the Ministry, did interfere ; but it was too late. As it is, the real legislators for Scotland are the Home Secretary and the Lord Advocate ; for the mass of English members are too indifferent, and too ignorant of Scottish affairs, to care much which way they vote. A people disunited, a church torn asunder, tardy and therefore useless legislation ; such are the results of the central system. On the whole, then, the example of Scotland, so far from proving that Ireland should be content to be considered as a part, a mere appendage of England, proves exactly the contrary.



Here some may ask do you then recommend a Local Parliament for Scotland? We answer, that our business now is not with Scotland but with Ireland. When a general wish for such an institution shall have declared itself in Scotland, it will be time enough to consider whether that wish should be complied with. Meanwhile it is sufficient to show that the system which we recommend for Ireland is quite applicable to Scotland. Scotland might have her local parliament as well as Ireland, and yet continue to send her 53 representatives to the Imperial Parliament in London. And as in the former case, the Imperial Parliament without the Irish members would constitute the British Parliament; so now, the same assembly, without the Irish and Scotch members, would constitute the English Parliament. The Federal system is of admirable pliancy, and easily accommodates itself to a great variety of circumstances.

3. But the argument, which, we believe, weighs most with Irish Protestants against the restoration of a domestic Parliament, is what may be called the *argumentum ad terrorem*. Conscious of their past injustice, and believing, like most wrong-doers, that the injured never forget, the Protestants fear that an Irish legislature would oppress and pillage them, and establish Catholic ascendancy. This is the true reason which still keeps Protestants aloof, while the cry for Repeal is echoed by the Roman Catholics from one end of the island to the other; and if this dread be once removed, we doubt not that they will cordially join the national movement.

We frankly confess, that when our attention was first turned to the question of Repeal, we did participate in this dread; but the more we have reflected upon the subject, the more we are convinced that the fear is utterly groundless.

There are two grand reasons for this opinion; the past conduct of the Roman Catholics, and the probable composition of the Irish Parliament.

When we revert to the period subsequent to the reign of Elizabeth, but previous to that of Charles II., when restrictive laws were passed and enforced; we find that, in spite of the penal Acts of Elizabeth, Roman Catholics and Protestants really lived together on pretty equal terms. What a system of justice and equality could do, may be learned from the reign of James the First, the best monarch that Ireland ever had. In the ninth year of his reign, the first *general* Irish Parliament was held, (former parliaments having been only partial,) and it contained both Catholics and Protestants, the latter being the more numerous only by one-fifth. Afterwards the spirit of fana-

ticism among the English Puritans, and the spirit of liberty among the English Whigs, alike contributed to the disunion and oppression of Ireland. But even under a system of the most revolting inequality, even under the Penal laws, we are told that "the Catholic and the Protestant lived in habits of great harmony: they harboured no animosity or indisposition towards each other; the one governed without opposition, the other submitted without resistance; and the Catholic clergy had every inclination to retain their flock within proper limits, and found no difficulty in effecting that object."\* Again, "the Catholic clergy had then an unlimited influence over the people of their own persuasion. Though the cruel impolicy of the Penal statutes had not been altogether set aside, they remained dutiful and obedient to the sovereign power, cheerfully submissive to the existing laws, and friendly and affectionate to their Protestant fellow-subjects."†

During the grand movement of 1782, nothing could exceed the moderation and patriotism of the Catholics. Though prohibited by statute from bearing arms in Ireland, and consequently inadmissible into the ranks of the Volunteers, yet they "neither took offence nor showed any jealousy at the want of confidence: on the contrary, with their money and their exhortations, they zealously assisted in forwarding those very associations into which they themselves had not admission. Their calmness and their patriotism gained them many friends."‡ Afterwards "the Catholics became also practically active in the same cause; considerable numbers of that body now took up arms, formed regiments in several districts, and placed themselves entirely under the command and control of their Protestant officers and fellow-subjects. All was unanimity in the armed bodies."§ Again, after the declaration of Independence, we read that "the people were united; Catholic and Protestant were on the most cordial terms; the voice of patriotism had exorcised the spirit of discord—the Catholic for the moment forgot his chains, and the Protestant no longer recollected his ascendancy—peace, order and security extended over the whole island."||

This bright period, this period of unanimity, was no doubt ere long followed by the darkest and most lamentable event in Irish history, the Rebellion; but that did not originate with the Catholics. Another Protestant historian says, "in justice to the Catholics it must be observed, that the conspirators were not exclusively or even originally of

\* "Historic Records of the Legislative Union," *ch.* ii.

† *Id.*

‡ *Id.*

§ *Id. ch.* xvi.

|| *Id. ch.* xviii. Let it be borne in mind that Sir Jonah Barrington was a Protestant.

that community, the society of United Irishmen having been instituted chiefly among Protestants.”\* Such were Theobald Wolfe Tone, Hamilton Rowan, Arthur O'Connor, late member of the Irish Parliament, Oliver Bond, Councillor Emmet, and Lord Edward Fitzgerald, early and leading conspirators. The Irish Rebellion was a wild and democratic movement, one of the many movements which sprang from the contagion of French revolutionary principles, and had nothing to do with Catholicism. “Arthur O'Connor, Thomas Eddis Emmet, Dr. M'Nevin, Samuel Neilson, and other principals of the conspiracy, gave details on oath in their examinations before the secret committees of the two Houses of Parliament, from which it appeared that the Rebellion originated in a system formed, not with a view of obtaining either Catholic emancipation, or any reform compatible with the existence of the constitution, but for the purpose of subverting the government, separating Ireland from Great Britain, and forming a democratic republic.”†

In our own days, during the great struggle for Emancipation, nothing could be more exemplary than the conduct of the Roman Catholics; and they have maintained the same line of conduct during the Repeal agitation. The promise of Emancipation, understood to be made to them at the Union, being shamefully violated, year after year did they persevere, strenuously but always peaceably, to demand equality of rights; and in spite of their indignation at being duped, and the impatience of hope long deferred, they maintained that conduct to the end. Nor when the battle was won, did they show any undue exultation, nor insult their Protestant fellow-subjects. They did not even exclude them from Parliament or the Municipalities, but along with some Catholics, they have continued to choose many Protestants. Surely such men are entitled to some credit, when they affirm in the most solemn manner, that they seek not ascendancy, but equality. Indeed, from the above facts, we are strongly inclined to believe that the religious and political rancour which has been the bane and disgrace of Ireland, has prevailed chiefly among the Protestants, who hated the Catholics because they had injured them.

The last mentioned fact naturally brings us to the second reason, why the fears of the Protestants are groundless; viz.—the probable composition of the future Irish Parliament.

With respect to the House of Lords, there can be no question. The

\* See Miller's History of the Reign of George III., *ch.* xxix.

† See Miller's History, *ch.* xxix.



immense majority of that body is Protestant; for according to Mr. O'Connell, the Roman Catholic peers are only about five per cent. of the whole; and according to Mr. Hely Hutchinson, they amount at most to twenty. Here, then, at all events, the Protestants have nothing to fear.

But it may be thought the House of Commons will be composed very differently. No doubt there will be a considerable difference, but after all, we think it probable that here also the majority will be Protestant. Our reasons for this opinion are as follows: Though the great majority of the Irish people is Roman Catholic, yet we must bear in mind that the mass of the landed property is in the hands of Protestants. Now, there is perhaps no people on the face of the earth who have a greater respect for wealth, rank, and station, than the Irish. It is an immense mistake to suppose, as some do, that the present movement is democratic, or that the Irish are at all prone to democracy; on the contrary, no where is aristocracy more deeply seated. Nowhere can a land proprietor more easily make himself both respected and loved than in Ireland. He must be almost a savage if he be hated among such a people. If he conduct himself with bare decency, if he refrain from letting his lands on a rack-rent, from harsh exaction of his dues, above all from ejectment and clearances, he may live and die in the midst of a devoted tenantry. Nor does it signify what his religion may be, if he be but a good landlord, or even not a very bad one.

Besides, Ireland does not, like England, contain many large manufacturing towns, the native seats of democracy, but is in the main agricultural. Thus, while in the United Kingdom there are 309 cities and boroughs returning 405 members to the Imperial Parliament, and 114 counties which return 253 members; in Ireland, according to the above plan, there would be 173 county and only 127 city or borough members. Moreover, Protestant Ulster, the most manufacturing and the most democratic part of Ireland, would send 50 county members, and more than a fourth of the borough members; and though in the other boroughs the Roman Catholics should prevail, yet it is highly probable that the majority of all would be Protestant. For where the mass is Roman Catholic, it is also agricultural, and submissive to the landed and Protestant aristocracy; and where the many are democratically inclined, and free from the landlord's influence, there they are Protestant.

These probable reasons are confirmed by the experience of the last fifteen years. We have already remarked that since Emancipation,

Catholics and Protestants have been elected indiscriminately. Mr. O'Connell goes farther, and says, "In no instance at any Parliamentary election was a Catholic preferred to a Liberal Protestant. In every instance of Parliamentary elections, a Liberal Protestant has been preferred to a Catholic. The same principle and practice have prevailed in our Municipal elections. In every instance, the Liberal Protestants have been preferred to Catholics."\* And what has been the proportion of Irish Roman Catholic members in the Imperial Parliament since Emancipation? The answer to this question is a triumphant refutation of the alarmists. Will it be believed by them that on an average not more than ten per cent. of Irish Roman Catholic gentlemen have been returned to Parliament since 1829 †? To attempt to add any thing to this fact, would indeed be useless.

This result may to some appear strange, but it is not unexampled. The Roman plebeians fought hard to be admissible to the Consulship; but after they had gained their point, during a long time few were chosen. The people were satisfied with the *right*, and continued in general to give their votes to those whom they used to elect.

Upon the whole, we conceive that we are fully justified in concluding that the fear of Catholic ascendancy and Catholic oppression is a panic fear, without any solid foundation, except the consciousness of injury inflicted, and the disbelief in forgetfulness and forgiveness; that while the past conduct of the Roman Catholics should greatly lessen that dread, the probable composition of an Irish Parliament should dispel it altogether.

We shall notice but one more objection applicable to the Restoration of the Irish Parliament in any shape,—an objection common enough in England, and often used to dismiss the subject at once. It is said that the Irish are, as a people, too excitable, too changeable, too devoid of perseverance, and too divided, to govern themselves; that the best that

\* Mr. O'Connell's letter before quoted.

† "In the year 1829 the Roman Catholic gentry were made eligible to sit in Parliament. They had fought bravely the battle of their party, and they came out of the contest free and respected; therefore in soliciting the suffrages of their fellow-countrymen, they were aided not only by political success, but by religious enthusiasm. What was the result of that great movement which stirred to its inmost depths the mind of Catholic-Ireland? Why this, as far as my argument is concerned, that an average of ten per cent., at the utmost, of Roman Catholic gentlemen were returned to the Imperial Parliament from 1829 to 1844; a period of fifteen years, full of political agitation, in the course of which it is almost needless to recall to your mind the unceasing contumely which was poured on the Roman Catholic religion and its priesthood." See Mr. Hely Hutchinson's admirable "letter" (himself a Protestant) "to the Protestants of Ireland," published in the *Nation*, November, 1844.

can befall them is to be tolerably governed by another. In answer to this objection we shall merely refer to two remarkable periods of Irish history—periods uncommonly trying—which may afford a fit test of the national character. These periods are the glorious era of 1782, and the present; particularly the last year, the year of monster meetings and Repeal agitation. Consider for a moment the position taken up by Ireland in 1782. Certainly in no age or country was ever any thing seen more admirable. Almost all great revolutions have been sullied by crime and bloodshed; but the Irish was without a stain. The very opening of the French Revolution was disgraced by barbarous scenes. On the twenty-first October, 1789, during the first and best period of the movement, an innocent man, the unfortunate François, was seized upon in a court of justice by a ferocious mob, who, after dragging him to the street, and hanging him from a lamp, paraded his head on a pike, and gave it to be kissed by his brother bakers, and even by his fainting wife. Did Ireland present any such horrors? No. Instead of blood-thirsty mobs, the Volunteers arose with all the order of regular soldiers. The country was armed, but the country was peaceful; for the Volunteers kept their hand upon the hilt of the sword, but they drew it not. They met in arms, they met even in council; they deliberated with all the vigour of youth and the wisdom of age; they urged the Parliament, but they forced it not; and when the House resisted, they respected the sanctuary of law. Such was the conduct of a people smarting under the wrongs of centuries, smitten in its commerce, insulted in its religion, and degraded into a conquered province. Never was greater forbearance united with resistless power; for 150,000 volunteers were spread over the face of Ireland, while England was worn out by the American war.

The conduct of the people during the Repeal agitation, and during the whole continuance of the State Trials, is scarcely less to be admired. "Every one must see, that this is a movement of no ordinary character; for here we have numbers, overwhelming numbers, without brawl or confusion; zeal without violence; the highest political excitement without outbreak or revolution. Every age has seen its popular disturbances, its tumults, wars, or revolutions; but what age but our own has witnessed such a movement as this? Had any one predicted such an event, he would probably have been set down as a fool; for his predictions would have been at variance with past experience in every other country. This order, this peace, in the midst of the greatest excitement, has no doubt been prepared and assisted by another event, itself fully as wonderful as the former: namely, the sudden reformation in



the habits of the mass of the people. This reformation appears really a miracle, if we consider on the one hand the previous habits of the Irish peasantry, their known addiction to whiskey; and on the other, the feebleness of the means whereby so great a change has been effected. An humble priest urged by his own energy, and aided only by the goodness of his cause, has suddenly converted five millions of men. If ever there was an event that looked like a departure from the usual course of nature, if ever there was a case where Providence seemed to interfere in the affairs of men, surely this is one."

In the face of such facts, of such long-suffering, forbearance, temperance, and yet energy, exemplified under the most trying circumstances, how can it be said that the Irish are unfit to govern themselves?

That the unhappy disunion hitherto so prevalent in Ireland is an obstacle to self-government, all must admit. But there is reason to believe that nothing would contribute more to heal that disunion than the establishment of a domestic legislature.

It is found universally that the best way to make people friends who have previously thought ill of each other, is to bring them together. The strongest prejudices and antipathies give way before the amiable intercourse of social life, as snow before the mid-day sun. Let then Catholics and Protestants meet in a domestic Parliament, let them constantly see and hear each other, let them transact business together, whether in the whole House or in Committees, and they will become acquaintances, perhaps friends; and on returning to their homes they will spread it abroad that both may be very good people. Unless then the dissensions of Ireland be such as to render self-government impossible or dangerous, they are rather an argument in its favour. And, after all, there is the Imperial Government at hand, in case of any danger to the Protestants, which, from what we have said, appears to be chimerical.

The following objections apply, in particular, to Federalism.

First, it is said that the Federal connexion by means of Imperial representation is all for the advantage of England, that to Ireland it would be no benefit.\* How any measure calculated to secure the good government of the United Kingdom should be of no advantage to Ireland, a large integral part of that kingdom, it is not easy to conceive. Let us take for the sake of illustration a possible case. Suppose Total Repeal to be carried, and Great Britain and Ireland to have two Par-

\* See Mr. Charles Gavan Duffy's letter to Mr. O'Connell, dated Rathmines, October 18, 1844, published in the *Nation* newspaper of the following day.

liaments quite independent of each other. This being supposed, might not the British Parliament impose duties upon Irish commodities, *as it did formerly*? Might it not treat Ireland as a foreign country, or at best as a colony, and lay the same duties on Irish as on foreign or colonial produce? And if it chose to do so, who could hinder it? The Irish Parliament indeed might retaliate by taxing British exports; but if this measure failed, it could only do harm to both countries; and the shocking spectacle would be seen of two nations nominally united, waging a war of tariffs against each other. The possibility of such an event is effectually prevented by means of the Federal connexion, for were a measure of that kind proposed, the 105 Irish members would rise up as one man to oppose it, and they would be joined by all the Liberal British members. In the face of such an opposition, no such measure could be carried or even proposed. And this is only one case out of many in which England might seek to harass her sister, as she was wont, when Ireland possessed her own Parliament, but was not represented in that of Britain. How then can it be said that the Federal connexion would be of no advantage to Ireland?

Secondly, it is objected that Federalism requires a complete remodelling of the British Constitution, the overthrow of the old, and the construction of a new one. This is quite a mistake. There would be nothing new but the local Irish Parliament, and that is a restoration rather than a novelty. As we have proposed, the present Imperial Parliament, without the Irish members, would constitute the British Parliament; and if at any time Scotland should seriously demand a local legislature, that same assembly, without the Irish and Scotch members, might be the English Parliament. But Federalists do not insist on applying the principle to Scotland at present. Let it first be tried in Ireland, and we shall then see whether it should be applied to Scotland.

Total Repeal is a far greater change than Federalism, and the state to which it would bring us never existed in Ireland but for eighteen years. The Union also was a far greater change than Federalism; for no one could anticipate the consequences of the admission of 100 Irish members into the House of Commons; yet it was the work of a Tory ministry. Federalism merely unites two elements, already known to the Constitution, Imperial and Irish legislation, which have been tried separately, but never together. It is a new combination of old elements. The Union, with all its injustice, contained one good principle, which we ought not to throw away, but improve by blending it with another.

Thirdly, it has been asserted that "some of the Federalists do not contemplate a House of Lords for Ireland."\* Whether there be any such, I know not, but that objection does not apply to the scheme here proposed.

Fourthly, we are asked "how will an Irish minority be able to influence a house where it is powerless now? A strong substantial claim for domestic legislation arises out of the indifference with which our interests are treated by the English majority—what guarantee is there, or can there be, that it will be different hereafter?"† The ready answer to this is, that Irish interests would be discussed in the Irish not in the Imperial Parliament.

Lastly, we are told that Federalism will not be so powerful a remedy for Absenteeism as Total Repeal. In this we agree. Though the institution of a domestic legislature will assuredly check and greatly check Absenteeism, yet Imperial connexion will always draw some to Great Britain; but this evil we cannot avoid, without breaking off that connexion altogether.

The question has been put to me whether the same persons should be eligible to both Parliaments; and in either case a difficulty has been started. If they be eligible to both, they will be distracted between their two duties, and will feel little inclined to begin a second session, after having sat through a first: and if they be not so eligible, the Irish Parliament may be deprived of the most distinguished men, and therefore may command less respect. If this be the alternative, we cannot doubt which side to choose; for the former is only an inconvenience, the latter a decided evil. And this inconvenience might be greatly lessened. The Irish Parliament might meet before the Imperial, say early in December, like the French Chambers; and the Imperial Parliament, after the vote on the address, might become a British House, and attend exclusively to British interests, leaving the general business of the Empire to a later period of the session. Thus an interval would elapse between the close of the Irish Parliament and the necessary attendance of Irish members in London.‡ In any case, the latter need scarcely be more occupied than at present, only they would have to attend to Irish affairs in Dublin instead of London, and they would have

\* See Mr. Gavan Duffy's letter above cited.

† Id.

‡ If the Session of the Irish Parliament were not closed before the opening of the Imperial, the former might have a short recess, during which, Irish members of both might repair to London, to be present during the debate on the Address, and then return to their own country. The facilities for travelling in our days would greatly diminish the inconvenience of these journeys to and fro.



nothing to do with interests exclusively British. Another advantage also would attend this arrangement, viz. that the necessary residence of Irish members in London would be rendered as short as possible, and Absenteeism checked as much as could be.

V. That the Union, as carried in 1800, was an unconstitutional measure, was proclaimed from the first by the highest legal authority. Many of the ablest lawyers entirely denied the competence of the Irish Commons to pass or even receive any Act of Union extinguishing their own existence, and betraying the trusts they were delegated to protect. Such were Saurin, Plunkett, Ponsonby, Ball, Bushe, Curran, Burrowes, Fitzgerald, A. Moore, &c. The words of Saurin are very remarkable; "If," said he "a legislative Union should be so forced upon this country against the will of its inhabitants, it would be a NULLITY, and resistance to it would be a struggle against USURPATION, and not a resistance against Law." "Sir," said Plunkett, in addressing the Speaker of the House of Commons, "I, in the most express terms, deny the competency of Parliament to do this act; I warn you, do not dare to lay your hands on the Constitution. I tell you that if, circumstanced as you are, you pass this Act, it will be a mere NULLITY, and NO MAN IN IRELAND WILL BE BOUND TO OBEY IT: I make the assertion deliberately; I repeat it; I call on any man who hears me to take down my words. *You have not been elected for this purpose.*"....."Yourselves you may extinguish, but Parliament you cannot extinguish. It is enthroned in the hearts of the people—it is enshrined in the sanctuary of the Constitution—it is as immortal as the island which it protects."

Let us now attend to Chief Justice Bushe: "I forget for a moment the unprincipled means by which the Union has been promoted, and look on it simply as England reclaiming in a moment of our weakness that dominion which we extorted from her in a moment of our virtue—a dominion which she unfairly abused—which invariably oppressed and impoverished us, and from the extortion of which we date all our prosperity."

But it is not necessary to bring in authority to prove so plain a point, as that an assembly, elected for a few years, and before the question of an Union had been agitated, was incompetent to pass a measure destructive not only of the present, but of all future assemblies, binding its countrymen for ever, and depriving them of all legal means of redressing any grievances, or repealing that very measure. What is such a pretension but an attempt to adapt one of the finest inventions to the basest purposes, to turn the Representative system into an instrument of slavery? Had an appeal been made to the nation, to those who

chose the Parliament, the case would no doubt have been different ; but *this was not done* ; and therefore the Union, as carried in 1800, was an act unconstitutional and revolutionary.

This being so, heavy indeed was the responsibility of the Minister who carried through that measure. If it be a fundamental axiom of our Constitution that violence on one side justifies resistance on the other, an axiom acted upon in our own Revolution of 1688, as well as in the French Revolution of 1830, then the Minister who carried the Union, by that act compromised the Crown, and rendered obedience a matter not of *duty*, but of *prudence*. He might therefore have been justly arraigned for high treason.

Even had Constitutional forms been observed, the Union, as passed in 1800, must ever have been hateful to Irishmen. It must ever be associated with the deepest degradation that can befall a people—the sale of its Independence, by those appointed to guard the national welfare and national honour. A sale it was, and nothing but a sale ; the Independence of Ireland being bartered for titles and hard money. By the Act of Union, twenty-six Peers were created, and twenty more advanced to a higher rank in the Peerage ; and (oh climax of shamelessness and degradation !) the Irish House of Commons actually voted one million and a half of money to *compensate*, that is, to *bribe* themselves.

But corruption was not the only engine worked by a ministry, supplied with funds not only from Ireland itself, but also from the wealthy realm of Great Britain. Terror, overpowering terror, was likewise used to suit their purpose. They seized with eagerness a moment of fear and depression, consequent on an unfortunate Rebellion ; no time would they allow for reflection ; they terrified the Protestants, cajoled the Catholics, bullied some, bribed others, and even threatened to *fight* all who opposed them :\* but after all, they could never get an absolute majority of more than *eight*, or a relative of more than *forty-three*, in the House of Commons ; and with this majority, thus acquired, they extinguished an ancient legislature, a nation's independence !

There is one class of men to whom, in conclusion, we would address a few words, namely, the Irish Peerage. How *they* could have been brought to consent to an Union, baffles all comprehension. That a House of Commons, such as the Irish was, returned in great part

\* See in Sir Jonah Barrington's " Historic Records," an account of a fighting scheme adopted at a dinner given by Lord Castlereagh to twenty of his most staunch supporters ; and communicated to Sir Jonah by one of the party, the following morning. Chap. xxvi.

by private influence, many probably in debt and needy, many desirous of place, pension, money, or title, should have been won over by the lavish expenditure of enormous wealth and patronage, was no doubt most disgraceful, but it is conceivable.

But what had the Peers to gain by an Union? Wealth they possessed already, many possessed great wealth, and rank with the highest political privileges belonged to all. How, then, could they consent to a measure which would deprive them, as a body, of all political importance, and reduce them to the rank of gentry with an empty title? We do not wonder at their want of patriotism, we do not wonder at their want of public spirit, we do not wonder at their neglect of their high duties; we do not even wonder that they sacrificed their country; but we do wonder that they sacrificed themselves. To descend at once, and by their own act, from the dignity and importance of *hereditary legislators*, to become merely a titled Aristocracy, without constitutional privilege, must astonish any one who believes that men consult their own interest. Had such an act been committed for the sake of country, it would have been a noble sacrifice; but as it was for the sake of some imaginary private advantage, it was not only an act of baseness, but of egregious folly. To suppose that the right of electing 28 Peers to sit for life in the Imperial Parliament could be any compensation for the loss of a great hereditary privilege in their own country, and common to the whole body, argues a singular short-sightedness in the Irish Peerage. For what is an Irish Peer in London, or what is he in the Imperial House of Lords? Nobody, absolutely nobody, as compared with the same person in Dublin, and in a domestic Legislature.

We would therefore implore the Irish Peers to rally round the standard of Repeal, and demand their long-lost Parliament, if not for their country's good, at least for their own sake. We do not ask them to remember their time-honoured ancestry, we do not call upon them to be patriotic nobles, we do not adjure them by the *manes* of Leinster and of Charlemont; but we ask them to look to themselves. Let them consider that now they are but a titled gentry, something between nobleman and squire; and that only an Irish Parliament can restore them to the dignity of Peers.

*Signed,*

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